

SIX SEVERAL
SERMONS

Preached on *Isaiah*, 38. 1.

WHEREIN THAT
GREAT DUTY
OF

Setting our BODY and SOUL in Order,
For we shall Die, is at large opened and Explained.

Wherein also many

DIVINE TRUTHS
ARE

Made known relating to the same Matter;
And now Published, because of the exceeding
Importance and Concernment of this Subject
unto all People whatsoever.

R. Stander.

For Man also knoweth not his time, as the Fishes are taken in an evil Net, and as the Birds that are caught in the Snare; so are the Sons of Men snared in the evil time when it falleth suddenly upon them, Eccles. 9. 12.

For Precept must be upon Precept, Precept upon Precept, Line upon Line, Line upon Line, here a little and there a little, Isa. 28. 9.

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at the *Harp* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*, 1696.

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STERN

Printed on 14th, 38

WHEREIN THAT

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OF

our BODY and SOUL in Order
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ARE

Most known relating to the Divine Ministry
And now Published, for the use of the
Infinite and Conscience of the People
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Mh 27

St 14

St 9

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TO THE READER.

IF I were to Judge of all others by myself, I should think that all People of whatever Age or Condition of Life, should earnestly catch at and be very desirous to look into, and read all Books concerning Death and Mortality; if perhaps they might light upon any thing therein, which may either mitigate or lessen that fear of Death, which even in the midst of and throughout their Life is sensible in all Mens minds. Which same fear *hath Torment* and doth afflict them. But more especially if they may find any thing in their reading of this kind, which may Teach, Instruct and Direct them what they must do to be Happy after Death, and to make sure of it, all one as it is desired to live comfortably and happy before Death. for if People are so very much concerned (as we see they are) *what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall*

To the Reader.

be clothed for this short time, because these things are present and sensible, they should also take care beforehand, nay, they must and will unavoidably think, when *the end is come, the end is come*, Ezek. 7. 6. (which is doubled because the thing is *established by God* and for the certainty thereof) whether it shall go well or ill with them throughout all Eternity; for then these things will be present and sensible also. And it being the highest Wisdom to do those things whilst living (especially since those things are to be only done in our Life-time. *I must work the Works of him that sent me whilst it is day, the night cometh when no Man can work*) which we shall wish and desire we had done when we come to die, this should influence and actually persuade People even in the midst of their Youth, Health and Vigour, when they are Lusty and Strong, yea throughout all their Life here on Earth, to be continually employed about this one thing needful of *setting their Soul in Order* against the time it shall go out of this Body, and to make sure that when their Earthly House of this Tabernacle shall be dissolved, they may have a Building of God, not made with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens.

This is the difference between the Godly and Sinners, between Wise Men and Fools; the Godly and Wise do only those things in time before it be too late, or the *Door is shut*, which the Sinners and Fools do at last bethink themselves and

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and wish (it is the part of Fools to say, I never thought it would come to this) when it is too late and the time is over and past.

As Christ said, the People of *Nineveh* will rise up in Judgment against the People of this Generation and condemn them. So I testifie in this my day, that the Heathen may rise up in Judgment against the People of this Generation and condemn them. For they (especially the wiser sort, some of them defining Wisdom to be a Meditation of Death) did search and enquire diligently and think continually what should become of them after Death; albeit they knew nothing certainly concerning Immortality and future Life; but they had only a little glimmering and conjecture thereof. And yet this did put them upon the practice of Moral Virtue and the doing of Good Actions, that thereby they might be Happy after Death. But now in this Christian Countrey, there is a most clear Gospel-Light and Revelation concerning it; yet to most People herein Death is like a Damp which puts out all their Lights of Pleasure; and through Satan's acting with all deceivableness in them that perish, the greatest part of Men and Women do concern themselves but very little about it. But notwithstanding their Supineness and Negligence (which is the miscarriage of the whole World) the Children of God, the Heirs of Life and Immortality in all their several Generations and Countries

To the Reader.

were always and all along even in the midst of Life, Health and Prosperity, great Meditators of Death.

O that I my self might be of their number; but as some little Hope and Evidence thereof I did always as for my part even from my Tender Years think very much of Death and what would follow thereon. I now call to remembrance my Thought and searching of Heart which was in the days of old, when I was but a Stripling, I did then Commune with mine own Heart, and my Spirit made diligent search, What will become of me after that this Body of mine which I carry about me, is laid in the Earth? For I did find then that my Spirit would live and abide elsewhere, as truly God hath shewn this unto me from within my self ever since I was a Child, and had the least Knowledge of Good and Evil, that there was another Life and a succeeding State which People should enter upon and go into after they were gone off from this Earth. I was all along for the greater part, and I am still as verily persuaded and ascertained of it, as I am sure of this Life which I now live, or that I now write down these words. And thereupon revolving and pondering many things in my mind, how that all here is but vain, little and passing away as a Shadow and doth not signifie much afterwards, fain would I be Happy and Safe as to that succeeding and Eternal State of things, into which my

Soul

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Soul must be launched forth out of this Body.

Accordingly I have made it my business to read all Books and Sermons that I could light upon which treat of this matter. But especially I have searched and enquired diligently into the Scriptures, in the which we think that we have Eternal Life. But we know assuredly that the way to Eternal Life is taught and shewed therein. And I desire that what things I have in the following pages, brought forth out of that Treasury of Heavenly Truths, may be published for the Benefit and Instruction of others.

For I do not write these things out mine own Head, nor yet from mine own Imagination and Invention, but only from the Scriptures which *are given to make us wise unto Salvation*; and what is rightly inferred from Truth, is Truth likewise. And although this Scripture way of writing is not so much liked of and received by the Wise and Disputer of this World, or by those who would be thought Learned according to Mode and Fashion; Yet all other Books and Sermons, whether they *steal every Man his word from his Neighbour* and borrow it from other Mens Writings; or if it be the meer Product of their own Wit and Knowledge, if it doth not arise from and is bottomed on this Pillar and

- To the Reader.

Ground of Truth, it is all but as so much Chaff, in comparison to the Wheat. *I have more Understanding than all my Teachers, for thy Testimonies are my Meditation. I understand more than the Antients, because I keep thy Precepts.*

Many People think that they have the least need of Books of any thing in the World; but they must necessarily have Food and Raiment for the Body, or Physick against or in the time of Sicknes. But if such had Faith and Knowledge, they would apprehend, that, when the Commandment of God is, *Buy the Truth and sell it not; also Wisdom and Instruction and Understanding*, Prov. 23. 23. It was equally and alike necessary to buy such Books which contain Propositions of *Truth*, and *Wisdom*, and *Instruction* and *Understanding*, as to buy Food and Raiment for the Body, or the things which Minister unto sensual Pleasure. For the *Incorruptible Seed of the Word* doth all one feed up the Soul unto Eternal Life, and is as necessary for her unto this end, as Meat and Drink doth feed and nourish the Body and preserve it in Temporal Life. The Word and Truth of God being that *Bread which cometh down from Heaven and giveth Life unto the World*. So that, it is the best way of laying out our Money for that which is *Bread* indeed. As so it will appear when People must give account for every Talent received, and how they used and expended the same.

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same. Hereby also may be justified the Wisdom of our Nation in giving a settled and established Maintenance to such as Preach Sermons; and also herein the *Labourer is worthy of his Hire*, Luk. 10. 7. If they did divide the Word of Truth aright, giving to every Man his Portion. Tho' here again is need of a distinguishing Judgment which can separate between the Precious and the Vile, (But he that is Spiritual judgeth all things.) To know and discern between what Books are really Good to the Use of Edifying and what are not; so as to receive the one, and reject the other. *He that hath my Word, let him speak my Word faithfully; What is the Chaff to the Wheat? saith the Lord*, Jer. 23. 28. As all Scripture is profitable, so all Divine Truth is profitable, and such Books as contain most of this sort, and affect the Heart and Conscience, Instructing and Exhorting the Soul to the Things which belong to her Peace, and how to make her Calling and Election sure, these are to be preferred before all others; and accordingly those People do think so who are *renewed in the Spirit of their Mind*, and take delight in the Things of God.

I had rather be faithful to him that appointed, yea and employed me in the Ministration of his Word, as *Moses was faithful in all his House*. As we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so we speak not as pleasing Men,
the

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but God who trieth the Hearts, although for this cause my Books should be rejected by the Multitude of this Hypocritical and Corrupt World (for *the Time is now come when they will not endure sound Doctrine.*) Then seek to please Men, for if I yet *pleased Men I should not be the Servant of Christ*) and so have my Writings received and approved off by them. But I do not altogether so much Regard the Censure of Men, for, *surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God, Isa. 49. 4.* which *Work* may be nevertheless Good and Right, and Acceptable in his sight, although as to the outward and visible success thereof, I have *seemed to labour in vain, I have spent my strength for nought and in vain.* It is one thing to be worldly wise but another to be wise unto Salvation.

As Balaam said, *Behold I have received Commandment to Bless, and he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it.* So we ought to assert the Commandments and Sayings of God, in the very same manner as they stand Recorded in his Statute-Book, the Bible, and not otherwise. However too many do corrupt and handle the Word of God deceitfully, by their Propheying not *right Things*, but *smooth Things* and *Deceits*. Yet still they cannot Reverse it. So as to alter the Truth and Signification thereof, nor yet to make one title of the Law to fail. 'Tis not so much what true
Prophets

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Prophets or Writers preach or make known ; nor yet at all what false Prophets or Writers preach or pretend to make known ; but whom the Word of God (who is judge himself, Psal. 50. 6.) Blesseth, they are Blessed ; and he or they whom the Word of God Curseth, they are Cursed.

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ERRATA.

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S' E R M O N I.

Isaiah 38. 1.

In those Days was Hezekiah sick unto Death, and Isaiah the Prophet, the Son of Amos, came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine House in Order, for thou shalt die, and not live.

A Serious and thorough Consideration concerning Death and Immortality, was the principal Inducement which did first bring me acquainted with the Ways of God; for I have thought much thereon from my Tender Years. And now as I approach Day after Day, nearer in Time towards it, so I ought to have it yet much more in Remembrance, with continued Thought and Searching of Heart, how I may grapple with that *last Enemy*; how either to pluck out or blunt the Edge of the Sting of Death, that the Grave may not have the Victory over me, that is, so far overcome me, as to consign me over unto the Second Death, I would not therefore by mine own good

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will

will Preach one Sermon, nor yet make one Prayer unto God, wherein I did not mention somewhat or other of this *Wisdom*, as the Holy Ghost calleth it, that we *may understand this, that we would consider our latter end*, Deut. 32. 29.

For indeed this is the Will of God, and of Christ, concerning us dying Creatures, as also it doth teach and instruct us, what Mind and Temper we should be in, now we are for a very little while Breathing as yet on this Earth. *Let your Loins be girded about, and your Lamps burning, and ye your selves like unto men that wait for their Lord, (observe that) when he will return from the Wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately; blessed are those Servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching.* And so we should every one of us wait and watch for the coming of the Lord our God, and especially for his Harbinger Death, which he sends before for to bring our Souls unto himself, the *God unto whom shall all flesh come*, Psal. 65. 2. or rather what inhabits in Flesh, shall come. At the Death or Departure of each Person, the Body or Dust returns to the Earth, as it was, and the Spirit to God that gave it.

Saith the Apostle, *Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our Learning, that we through Patience and Comfort of the Scripture might have hope*, Rom. 15. 4. And so this great place of Isa. 38. 1. which was written three or four Thousand Years ago, is written for our Learning, who live almost Seventeen Hundred Years after Christ. Yea, as Christ himself said upon another occasion, This Day is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ears, so I testifie unto all that shall hear or read these Lines, This Day is this Scripture, I mean, this very Text of Isa. 38. 1. fulfilled in your Ears; for instead of what is there said, *In those Days was Hezekiah sick unto Death*, now it may be read on this

this wise, In these Days are such an one, and such an one, naming the several People by their respective Names, and so it is of all the Dwellers in *England*, yea, and of all the Habitable Parts of the Earth, *They are all sick unto Death*. For though indeed it was thus originally said upon the account of an extraordinary Ulcer or Disease which was then upon *Hezekiah*; and by that phrase in the Gospel, *This sickness is not unto Death*, *John 11. 4*. we must distinguish between health and sickness, and again, between that kind of sickness which is Recoverable and Curable, and that sickness which indeed is Mortal, or a sickness unto Death; how then can it be here truly said, when many are in Health, Youth, Vigour, Lusty and Strong, that they are all sick unto Death? Nevertheless I will prove and make out what I afore-affirmed. Common Reason sheweth that a growing Tree is equally alive in the midst of Winter, although it doth seem as a barren, dead, and dry Tree, because then it doth not run in Sap; nor shoot forth in green Leaves, even so by the very same similitude, by supposing it contrariwise, it may be conceived, that in the midst of Youth, Health, Life and Vigour (which are the Spring and Summer of our Age) we are all the while sick unto Death; or as it is appositely and properly expressed in the Office of Burial, *In the midst of Life we are in Death*, because that we do all along carry about us in our Body the Seeds of this sickness unto Death, or the Seeds of Mortality: According as it is expressed in the Book of *Job*, *The Root of the matter is in you*; so as soon as we are Born, the Root of sickness, (which is the usual forerunner thereof) the Root of Death is in us, even from our Cradle unto our Tomb, so that it is no false Doctrine to affirm, That all People (even the most Young and Healthy) are sick unto Death.

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this wise, In these Days are such an one, and such a one, naming the several People by their respective Names, and so it is of all the Dwellers in *England*, yea, and of all the Habitable Parts of the Earth, *They are all sick unto Death*. For though indeed it was thus originally said upon the account of an extraordinary Ulcer or Disease which was then upon *Hezekiah*; and by that phrase in the Gospel, *This sickness is not unto Death*, *John 11. 4.* we must distinguish between health and sickness, and again, between that kind of sickness which is Recoverable and Curable, and that sickness which indeed is Mortal, or a sickness unto Death; how then can it be here truly said, when many are in Health, Youth, Vigour, Lusty and Strong, that they are all sick unto Death? Nevertheless I will prove and make out what I afore-affirmed. Common Reason sheweth that a growing Tree is equally alive in the midst of Winter, although it doth seem as a barren, dead, and dry Tree, because then it doth not run in Sap, nor shoot forth in green Leaves, even so by the very same similitude, by supposing it contrariwise, it may be conceived, that in the midst of Youth, Health, Life and Vigour (which are the Spring and Summer of our Age) we are all the while sick unto Death; or as it is appositely and properly expressed in the Office of Burial, *In the midst of Life we are in Death*, because that we do all along carry about us in our Body the Seeds of this sickness unto Death, or the Seeds of Mortality; According as it is expressed in the Book of *Job*, *The Root of the matter is in you*; so as soon as we are Born, the Root of sickness, (which is the usual forerunner thereof) the Root of Death is in us, even from our Cradle unto our Tomb, so that it is no false Doctrine to affirm, That all People (even the most Young and Healthy) are sick unto Death.

The Spirit of God did say thus of *Hazekiah*, even when he had Fifteen Years longer to live, as appears by the sequel of that Story; and so the same holds true of all Mankind severally. Though perhaps some among them may have the same period of time twice, thrice or four times over; for perhaps some of them, especially Children, may have thirty, forty five or sixty Years to live longer; yet even at this very Moment they are all sick unto Death. A proportionable number of strokes with an Hatchet will cut down the biggest Tree that did ever grow on the Earth: And although one stroke is given now, and then another, the Tree is all the while a cutting down. Even so each Day and Night, every Rising and Setting of the Sun are two strokes of this Hatchet, which (as Time is always in flux and succession) continues to be still cutting down the Tree of our Life. To pursue this same similitude again, though it be to another matter, yet it is to the same subject still, as to our own Death and Mortality. As it is written, *But every man in his own order*, 1 Cor. 15. 23. so I have often thought, that as God is the Lord of Life, he taketh away one and leaveth another in his own Order, which his own Order is not to us discernable; because that no respect or difference is had to Age, (for the oldest doth not most commonly go first) the Good or Evil, the Godliness or Ungodliness of the Person, that one lives longer than another. But the case of us all dying Creatures, as we are under the Everliving and Almighty God, is just like so many Trees growing in a Wood or Coppee; As to which the Owner or Proprietor sends his Bayliff, or Orders his Workmen to cut down one, and then another, according as each is marked out, and according as he hath use and occasion either for a tender Plant, or a well-grown Timber Tree for Building, or an old Tree for the Fire; even so the Great God over all

all, doth give Command and Commission to such a Disease, or outward Accident, (which herein may be compared unto his Hatchet or Instrument) to go and cut down such a Man or Woman, Stripling, Boy, Girl, Infant of Days, according as his Almighty Wisdom sees and knows best, either cut him down quite, or shake him ; for it is evidently seen, that he sends sickness to this Person when another is well; which sickness proves Mortal to some, and not to others ; for there is a sickness which he sends, and is unto Death : Again, there is a sickness which is not unto Death, but unto the Glory of God in sparing Sinners so long, and to the Benefit of them, if they did make a right use thereof ; which again is but a Reprieve, and short Respite ; for at last comes the Sickness or Accident, which is indeed unto Death. The Lord God of Heaven, (who knows all things) knows which of the Trees growing in this or that part of his Wood, (as are the several Cities, Towns and Villages throughout the Earth) are marked out for the very next to be cut down. Though we do not know it before, yet we do afterwards. Just like as at every Funeral we know not then, which of the Company that Accompanies the Bier will be carried next upon it themselves ; but this is seen and known afterwards.

The Word of Instruction, which doth arise from this Consideration and Apprehension is this, As when Jesus Christ said to his Disciples, *Verily one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say, Lord, Is it I?* Mar. 26. 21, 22. so we may even now hear the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, God our Creator, speaking unto us from Heaven on this wise, Verily I say unto you, that all of ye shall die, but one of you in particular shall die before the rest. God now speaketh thus from Heaven unto every Neighbourhood and Assembly of People;

and we should be hereupon not so much exceeding sorrowful, as exceeding careful ; to live in *trembling*, *Psal.* 2. 11. and *pass the time of our sojourning here in fear*. For we should every one of us begin to fear and provide in such a manner, as if it was certainly I my self that must die the very first, and next of any one in this Parish or Neighbourhood. It is godly discretion so to live each and every Day, as if it should be certainly our last ; and so it is here the same godly Discretion, and Soul-saving Wisdom, to reckon upon our selves as the Man that shall die the very next ; for it is an essential part of Wisdom to think the worst, and put the case at the worst, and to provide beforehand against the worst (that shall or can possibly happen) for in both these instances we are never the nearer Death for thus doing, but only better provided and prepared for it. We should so live now we are *sick unto Death*, in the sense afore-explained, as if we were indeed *sick unto Death* in the common meaning and acceptation of the Word. We should so live every Day now we carry the Seeds of Corruption and Mortality about with us, as we would live if the Plague were upon us, and the Blue Spots and Tokens did appear on our Skin, which do always and certainly preface a very near approaching Death. The Reason whereof is this, Because that every Day must come into account, and we must be judged for the Thoughts, Words and Actions of every Day after Years of Discretion, and we are come to the Knowledge of Good and Evil. I shall be Judged, and must give Account for what I did when I was but Sixteen, Twenty, or Twenty-five Years old, as now when I am more than Thirty ; and so I shall be called in question at the Judgment-seat of Christ, for what I do now, as for what I shall do in the last Month, Week and Day of my Life, so that the Consequence is Natural and Necessary, I ought now as much to walk
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in all Holy Conversation and Godliness, and to eschew Evil and do Good, as much, and all one as if it was the last Month, Week and Day of my Life; for I shall be equally judged for one, as for the other.

The end of our Redemption is, That we might serve God without fear, in Righteousness and Holiness before him all the days of our Life. And although there is much talking in the World of Preparation for Death, and of providing for our latter end, as if it was then time enough to be godly, when we grow sickly or old. In no wise, God forbid, for it will go evil with that Soul which hath not been godly before. Yet in the Scriptures, which were given to make us wise unto salvation, which is a Perfect and All-sufficient Rule of Life, unless to settle Temporal Affairs from the Example of *Hzekiah* in the Text (which as it will by and by appear in the further prosecution of our Discourse thereon, hath a further Meaning and Intention herein) there is little said concerning Preparation for Death: The Holy Ghost thereby signifying, that the only Preparation for Death is by an Obedient and Holy Life, by ordering our Conversation aright, *Psal. 50. 23.* and as it becometh the Gospel of Christ, *Phil. 1. 27.* according to the tenour and requiring of all the words contained in the Bible, *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this Prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand, Rev. 1. 3.* But if thou wilt enter into life, (that is the Future and Eternal Life) keep the Commandments, *Mat. 19. 17.* which Commandments, Statutes and Judgments we should observe to do in the Land which the Lord God of our Fathers giveth us to possess it, all the days that we live upon the earth, *Deut. 12. 1.* Besides this, the Scriptures make mention of no other Preparation for Death. I have read that it is a Proverbial Saying among the Jews, (and there is a great deal of Truth contained in those old Proverbs)

*The Sacraments and Death require one and the same preparation, that is, in the Language and Direction of the Gospel, to trim our Lamps, Mat. 25. 7. that is, to put them in a readiness and posture of little more Brightness and Burning ; for there was Oyl in them before (for want whereof the Foolish Virgins were condemned and excluded from entring in with the Bridegroom) even so we should not have Grace and Holiness for to get then, but have them gotten before ; and only furbish up and make a little more Bright and Eminent the Graces and Gifts of God, that were long before in us. But now we are just ready to come forth to meet with our God, they should be a little more furbished, and made brighter than ordinary, for to have the acceptance and well pleasing of God. *The fine Linen, the Righteousness of Saints, Rev. 19. must be sure to be gotten and had long before ; yea, and it is there said, It should be kept clean and white. But if it can be washed and made cleaner and whiter than ordinary, just as we meet the Lord our Righteousness, this will be comely and convenient. And so we should be sure to be cloathed with the Garment of Salvation, and with the Robe of Righteousness all along ; but because this Garment and Robe will be apt to gather some dust and filth, whilst we are amidst the Corruption and Pollution in the World through Lust ; therefore it will be here meet and congruous to get them brushed up, scoured and rubbed, just as we appear before the Lord God who hath cloathed us with them. And as a Souldier should always have his Arms by him, but perhaps they may contract Rust or Foulness, therefore they are to be scoured up just as he goes forth to Exercise and Use them ; even so it should be as to our having and putting on the whole Armour of God. A Christian should always have by him, and on him, the Breast plate of Righteousness, and the Shield of Faith, and the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit,**

Spirit, Eph. 6. 14, 16, 17. But then more especially is he to look to it, that all this Armour be good and serviceable, or at least it should be rendred so, when he comes to *withstand with it in the evil Day.*

Truly, this is a Point of great Weight, and had need be very well observed and attended unto. For the general Mistake among People is, (which hath destroyed Thousands, and Ten Thousands) just like that of the *Foolish Virgins in Mat. 27.* which take their Lamps, but no Oil with them; and whilst the Bridegroom tarries, they all slumber and sleep, and then they are awaked on a sudden by the Bridegroom's coming, and then they have their Oil to get. *And whilst they go to buy, the Bridegroom comes, and they that were ready went in with him to the Marriage, and the door was shut. Afterwards (when it was too late) came also the other Virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day, nor the hour, wherein the Son of Man cometh.* And so is the common Error of many People, every one would fain be saved, but then they would work out their own Salvation when they have not Time for it, and when it is too late. Whereas they might, yea, and they should have done it before. I testifie unto all such, see to it that ye be wise in time. Whereas Jesus Christ saith, *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is called to day; the night cometh when no man can work.* But these foolish and deceived People would contradict and reverse that; for they neglect working whilst it is Day, and put it off to that time, when they cannot work. In truth, Satan who works with all deceivableness in them that perish, doth suggest those false Thoughts and Imaginations in those mistaken and miserable Souls.

I am sure, the words of our Text doth advise, and direct them otherwise, if they will give through heed and consideration thereto. For besides that, Heaven is very well worth labouring all the Days of our Life for; and there can never be too much done to avoid Hell. They might this know, that when *their strength is firm*, Psal. 73. 4. they are sick unto Death: And they must dye one time or another, as sure as they now live. And so they might have taken, and done throughout all their foregoing Life according to the exhortation in the close of our Text, *Set thine House in order, for thou shalt dye and not live.*

To use a not much unlike Reasoning as is in *Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8. Deut. 30. 11, 12, 13.* The plain Doctrine and Instruction which is delivered here, it is not *hidden from thee, neither is it afar off*; that there is need only of some extraordinary Prophet, who can foretel future, Unseen, Unthought of, Unexpected Events. For such a message as this, *Thou shalt dye, and not live*, the meanest Laick, or most common Person, knows altogether as well as well as the greatest Prophet or Preacher; or to express it according to those titles, wherein some are now a days dignified and distinguished, as the greatest Bishop, Dean or Doctor, or as the most learned Person. And as we sensibly find that things are apt to be in a confusion, or some disorder, upon the death or departure of any Person: So the natural Inference or Thought arises; yea common reason teacheth the same, even to set them in order, and prevent as much beforehand that disorder which otherwise would follow and ensue thereupon. There is no great need of another immediate Revelation from Heaven for this; for God hath already taught it unto us, by that common knowledge, which he hath given unto us as his reasonable Creatures; But yet God willing more abundantly to acquaint us with a lesson of so very great Importance,

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as indeed it is to every one of us: And seeing that the same hath a much further meaning, and requiring, than to order the Disposition of our Lands, Houses, Money, and Goods. For it hath a much more Noble, even a Spiritual Sence and Signification, to set our Souls, which dwell in this Earthly House of the Body, in order, for we shall dye, or yet more properly, we shall leave these Habitations of Clay. Therefore I say, that God hath ordered the same, for further security; and to bring it yet more to our Knowledge and Remembrance, to be written in his Statute Book the Bible, as also we may find the same Engraven in the Word, that is nigh us, even in our Heart; for we may also perceive a still Voice speaking from thence, *Set mine House in order, for thou shalt dye, and not live.*

Isaiah the Prophet the Son of Amos, came unto him and said. From hence we may also consider, How God who at sundry Times, and in divers Manners, spake in time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. For in those days, it was not so much Isaiah, but God himself, who spake this by Isaiah unto Hezekiah. To which agree those words of our Saviour unto his Apostles and Disciples, *For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of my Father which speaketh in you.* Mat. 10. 20: And so God spake by Moses, David, Job, and by all the Prophets. But now he speaks by Christ, who is the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, in whom all the others do meet and center. Searching what, or what manner of Time the Spirit of Christ, ~~which~~ *was* in them did signify. 1 Pet. 1. 11. The Spirit of Christ in them. In whom? Why, In the Prophets mentioned in the foregoing Verse: Whose Spirit did actuate them all, just like as the Soul doth actuate the Body. Although Christ was then in Heaven, and they were here on Earth, in their several Generations, long be-

before God did send his Son in the fulness of Time, for to become Flesh. The Spirit of God and of Christ are near one, and the same; and so God and the Word of God are one, and the same; according to that common Maxim, Nothing is in God, but what is God himself. So that we are not to look upon those words which we find written in the Bible, as the words of *Moses, Samuel, Job, David*, and the Prophets; or those in the New Testament, as the words of the Evangelists and Apostles, who yet did write and speak them; but we should consider of it higher and further as the word of God and Christ, which God and Christ spake by them. As when we send a Letter to one at a Hundred Miles distance, whom we have known or heard of; we do by that same Letter, speak to him in effect; yea, and as much to their knowledge and understanding, as if we were in the same Room together, and we did talk to them face to face: So I have often thought, that the Scriptures are as the Letter, or Epistle of the Most High God; which is sent unto us, the Inhabitants of this Earth; for hereby God doth speak unto us from Heaven, the Habitation of his Holiness, which is more than a Thousand or a Million of Miles distance from us, all one as if we heard outwardly his Voice (which in that sense, no Man hath seen God at any time, nor heard his Voice) or as if the Lord did dwell Visibly amongst us, which he doth not.

Is it so? Yes verily, Then this is a mighty Argument, and terrible Consideration against those who refuse to Read, or Hear the Word of God. *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on Earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from Heaven.* Heb. 12. 25. It was the Angel on Mount Sinai, and *Moses* and the Prophets that spake on the Earth; but it is Christ the Son of God that now speaketh from Heaven. For though Jesus Christ is long since ascended on High, and Sits on the Right

Right Hand of the Father; yet he speaketh to us from Heaven, even now in his Word, and in the Preaching and Ministry thereof. For as Moses of old time hath in every City, them that Preach him, being Read in the Synagogues every Sabbath Day: Even so now, Christ hath those who continually Preach him as Moses had; by how much he is not only greater than Moses, but even greater than the very Angels of God. And who will not hear the Ministers of Christ, who preach him, or who Preach the Word of God; for whosoever Preacheth the Word of God, Preacheth Christ, in as much as Christ is the Word of God: Neither would such be perswaded, if Christ should come once again into the World, after the same manner as he did, which will not be so; for his next coming will be unto Judgment; which Will be in Glory and in Power, and in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. But in the mean while, he hath gave the Word, and there are those who Preach it. He hath sent forth Labourers into his Harvest, with full Power and Commission, *He that beareth you, beareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth him that sent me.* Luke 10. 16. Even the Great God himself, who made the World and all things therein. What do ye think will become of those who despise God? As they who despise his Word, either preached or spoken, written or printed, do despise God himself. Why? God hath fortold us, what will become of such, *They that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* 1 Sam. 2. 30. This is not all neither; for God will answer, requite, and punish them in very like manner; *They shall go forth, and look upon the Carcasses of the Men that have Transgressed against Me; and they shall be an abhorring unto all Flesh.* Isa. 66. 24. Observe here the slighting kind of Phrase, *Carcasses*, the Holy Ghost makes use of. That such little, despicable, and vile Beings) who even in the midst

midst of Life, are but Men and Women in Carcasses; Notwithstanding some have Jolly and Red looks, *Are inclosed in their own Fat*, according to the *Psalmist's*, Phrase, or are arrayed in fine Cloaths) should ever behave themselves contemptuous or disdainful towards a most Excellent, Infinite, and Glorious Majesty, as the Invisible God is. If there should come any Letter to me, or any order concerning me, under the Great Seal of *England*, with the Royal Signet and Arms, and I would not Read nor look into it, nor hear what it was, but take and stamp it under my Feet, or Burn, and Tear it, or throw it into the Dirt, upon the Ground: All this, and such like, would be a contempt, and affront to the Kings Person: Even so every Divine Word and Truth, whether it be Preached Spoken, Written or Printed, doth Bear the Image and Supercription of the Invisible God, the great King of all the Earth. So that of necessity, a contempt and despising of the one, is a contempt & despising of the other also. He that despiseth the Word or Ministers of God, despiseth God himself. *Saith the Lord of Hosts, unto you O Priests, that despise my Name; and ye say, wherein have we Despised thy Name?* Mat. 1. 6. The Priests do there say, Wherein have we despised thy Name? And as they ask the Question in *Mat. 25. 44. When saw we thee an Hungred, or a Thirst, or a Stranger, and did not Minister unto thee?* So the doleful herd, that vast Multitude of cast a-ways, and forlorn Souls, who shall be condemned at the last Day, will be apt to think or say, wherein did I ye, and consist the great Evil-deserving, and malignity of Sin, that for that they must go away into Everlasting Punishment and Misery. They will perceive it somewhat more than we can now apprehend or assign the reason thereof in these Days of our Flesh: Though even then, they will not perceive it throughly, and to the utmost, till God shall discover, and convict them of it more and more,

more, by the Pains and Torments he shall inflict on them; for otherwise, such thoughts would not arise in their Hearts, neither would they ask such a Question. But this may be most surely gathered, and understood in the mean while, as from the place afore-quoted, in *Isa. 66. 24.* The reason is therein infolded and assigned why the Carcasses of some Men shall be exposed to publick view, because *They have Transgressed against the Lord.* So the like may be understood from *Dan. 12. 2.* *1 Sam. 2. 30.* And by *Mark 8. 38.* The reason why some there shall awake to shame and Everlasting contempt, is because they were ashamed of God, and of Christ, and of his Word, in this Adulterous and Sinful Generation: So they did despise God, and despise his Word in this Rebellious and Sinful World, whilst they were in the Days of their Flesh, and in this Life, before they did drop into the Dust of the Earth; and therefore it is that now they shall rise up to Everlasting shame and contempt.

As in those Days, when *Hezekiah* was sick unto Death, *Isaiah* the Son of *Amos* came unto him. And as *Paul* went in unto the Jews, and Reasoned unto them out of the Scriptures: So I do hereby denounce unto all such, who shall Hear or Read these Lines; whether ye have Pale, Ruddy, or Healthful Looks; yet all ye are sick unto Death; Thus saith the Lord, *Set your House in Order, for ye shall dye, and not live.*

What God doth speak at sundry Times, and in divers Manners, in time past by the Prophets, and in these last Days by his Son, who is the Word; and by his Ministers: He doth also, even now, speak the very same, by his Spirit within the Hearts and Consciences of each Man and Woman. And so I put ye all to it, that hear the Lord speaking, by me his Creature, unto ye his Creatures this Day. Do ye not? Or can ye not, at this very moment, perceive a still Voice, from with-
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in ye severally, which exactly answers unto, and witnesseth the very same, as is the Message of the Lord God unto ye, *Set your Houses in order, for ye shall die, and not live.*

Besides the sure Word of Prophecy, (for this is spoken of somewhat to come hereafter) *Wherunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a Light that shineth in a dark place*; there is also, and moreover, the *day dawn,* and the *day-star arising in your hearts*: Both which Lights do agree one to the other, and do serve to one and the same end, *viz.* to lead, guide, and direct us to Heaven that Place, where is the *in* of Life; in *thy Light shall we see Light*. As it is elsewhere written, The Sword without, the Terror within, which do both conspire and tend to a Third Thing, *viz.* Destruction. So contrariwise it stands in *the* as pertaining to the Salvation of Man. There is the *Word without*, and also the *Word within*; like *Ezekiel's Roll* in Chap. 2, *written within and without*: So there is also the Law of God written in the inward parts, and also in the Leaves of the Bible, Engraven in Tables of Stone, and also in Tables of the Heart; both which do agree in one, and in accordance to both, is Man's Life and Salvation. *What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.* What God hath ordered to be written and made known both ways, let no Man conceive without the other. The right understanding and consideration of this would prevent, lest under pretence of having more Veneration for the Word within, they have the less Esteem for the outward written Word.

As again, by minding only the outward written Word, they do not give so much heed to the *Di-*ates of the Spirit, and of the Word from within; which again, some Superficial, Nominal and Outward Worshippers do err in as to the other hand; whereas

Truth

Truth lies in the middle between both extreames; and the right manner of Acting, is to give heed, and have equal regard unto them both.

What the Everliving God doth say, that we dying Creatures should immediately obey. And such, who are indeed his *Saints* and People do assemble for no other purpose but to sit, *Deut.* 33. 3. and hear all things that are commanded from God and made known from his Word for to hear and do them, *Deut.* 5. 27. and they do hereby avouch themselves unto him to be their God, and then God will reciprocally avouch them to be his People. Set *ye* your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which I shall command your Children to observe to do all the words of this Law. For it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your Life, and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the Land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it, *Deut.* 32. 46, 47. It is your Life, hereby ye will be taught and instructed that though ye die, ye may live again; and what ye must do to inherit and partake of the Blessing which the Lord hath commanded, even life for evermore, *Psal.* 133. 3. For as the Sons of *Isaac* were to do somewhat for their Father before they received his Blessing: Even so we Creatures must do somewhat for God our Creator and Father (for so he is to all that shew themselves obedient Children) before he actually confers and bestows the Blessing which he hath already pronounced and made known, signified by that word, The Lord hath commanded, even Life for evermore. Through this thing (viz. Universal Obedience and observing all the words of his Law) ye shall prolong your days in the Land, whither ye go over *Jordan* to possess it. This is sufficient prolonging ones days to a witness to live the length of a whole Eternity, or to live for evermore. In the Land, that is, the new Heavens and new Earth where dwelleth Righteousness. After we are gone o-

ver *Jordan*; hereby is typified and signified the River of this Life) for to possess it. For indeed the very truth of the matter stands on this wise if we shall be rendered meet and found worthy. As Jesus the Prince of Life did say when he heard that *Lazarus* was sick, *This sickness is not unto Death*. When indeed it was a sickness unto Death, for *Lazarus* died of that sickness. But Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life, spake on this wise, knowing in himself what he would do, even raise *Lazarus* to Life again. And so it was for the Glory of God that God might be glorified thereby. Even so in very like manner the words of our Text may be read and reversed, *Set your House in order, for thou shalt live and not die*. For the Soul, which is we our selves, doth not die when it goes out of this Body, but only leaves this earthly House, and departs from this Body, and changes its place of Abode and Habitation. I remember that I was very much pleased and transported within my self, because I find from out of the Scriptures of Truth and mine own Spirit witnessing the same what I have Read in *Cicero* and *Zenophon*, *Heathen* Authors, where *Cyrus*, and *Cato*, and *Scipio* are brought in speaking to this purpose and effect. Saith *Cyrus*, *It could never be perswaded to me that these Souls of ours when they go out of this Body, do die or perish*. For most certainly they live unto God the *Father of Spirits*. For my part I do as firmly believe and am as verily perswaded of all this, as that I now write these Lines, or as I am assured that I now live and breath.

It hath been aforesaid, That even in the midst of Life, Health and Vigour every one of us was sick unto Death, because that we did all along carry about with us in the Body the Seeds of Corruption and Mortality. Which holds true as to the Flesh and outward part of us. But as to our Souls we are not sick unto Death, but *alive unto God* in the Apostle's Phrase, or alive unto Everlasting

ing Life if we have the Seeds of Grace and Holiness in our Souls ; which are indeed the Principles of Life and Immortality abiding within us. To this agrees the meaning of the Holy Ghost in several places of Scripture, particularly in the Gospel of *John*. Saith Jesus Christ, *Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life,* *John 5. 40.* *For the Bread of God is he that cometh down from Heaven and giveth life unto the world. I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Whosoever drinketh of the Water that I shall give him, shall never thirst ; but the Water that I shall give him, shall be a Well of Water, springing up into Everlasting life,* *John 4. 14.* *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his Belly shall flow Rivers of living Water,* *John 7. 38.* These two last Scriptures come directly to our present purpose. For it being here said, *In him a Well of Water springing up unto everlasting life,* and here it is said, *That it shall flow out of his Belly,* and by what the Scripture elsewhere saith, that such an one hath in him everlasting life, all this shews and confirms that the Saints and Servants of the Most High God, by having Grace and Holiness and the new Life ingrafted in them, they have also thereby even whilst their Souls inhabit in this weak, vile and dying Body here on Earth, the Seeds and Principles of Immortality and Eternal Life, so that they shall never see Death, that is Death Eternal ; and when their Souls go out of these Bodies, they do not die but live. And so it is found true in them what *Seneca* saith, who herein spake much more like a Christian than like an Heathen (for Flesh and Blood could not reveal these things unto him, but God his Creator) saith he, *That day which some fear to be their last (he means the Day of Death) is indeed the Birth-day of Immortality.* For in truth the Souls of the Righteous are then Born and brought forth into another World, into an infinitely better and more enduring state.

The Ungodly are not so. It is otherwise with the Wicked and the Children of Disobedience, or the Children of Perdition as the Scripture Phrases them. For what is the greatest Happines to the Righteous, is the beginning of Sorrows unto these. The Day of Death is either the best or worst of all the foregoing Days, even according as the foregoing Life hath been Good or Evil, Godly or Ungodly, for the Souls of these Miserable Creatures do also live and exist, and they are sensible also. Yet according to the meaning of the Holy Ghost, especially in many places of the Revelations, and also according to the desire and feeling of the Creatures themselves, it is Death and not Life, or rather worse than Life to abide in Torment, Pain and Misery. And therefore it is so often called the second Death, or Death. *The Soul that sinneth, it shall die. Turn you, turn you, why will ye die?* Not that the Souls of them will ever cease to be, in no wise. But they will be in such a wretched condition that Death would be better than Life. According as it is written, *In those days shall men seek to die, and death shall flee from them.*

As it is here explained these two manner of ways, this is the Order, Decree and Appointment of God our Creator upon all the Reasonable Inhabitants of the Earth, who are commonly called or known by the Name of Men and Women. *It is appointed for all once to die, but after that the Judgment,* and then they are to rise and live again. *For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the Graves shall hear his voice. And shall come forth. They that have done good unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil unto the Resurrection of Damnation.*

Seeing then that all these things must so be, yea, and they shall so be, what manner of Persons ought ye to be in all Holy Conversation and Godliness. Looking

for and endeavouring whatever we can in this short space between, during the few and evil days remaining of our Pilgrimage, that we may rise unto the Resurrection of Life. Most People have done some little good in the foregoing part of their Life according to their Station and Capacity, their Condition and Employment in the World. But as it was said, *Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu shall serve him much*: So let every one of us make the like Inference and Reasoning, and to take up the same Resolution as to put it in continued Practice unto the day of our several Deaths in reference to the God of *Israel*; hitherto and in the foregoing part of my Life, I have served God a little, and I have done a little good, but for what now remains I will serve God much, and labour whatever I can to do much good; for it will be only of the number of those that have done good that will rise unto the Resurrection of Life. This one thing to remember and practice, to observe and do is Benefit and Use enough for your coming to hear this Sermon. But I am sensible beforehand of all the Exhortation that hath or can be used as to this matter that this will be the effect of hearing this and of all other Sermons. As it was in reference to *Paul's* Preaching, *And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not*, Acts 28. 24. So some of ye will obey and do according to the things that have been spoken, others again will not obey and do thereafter. Some of ye will hear and endeavour to remember by pondering these things in your Heart after ye are gone from hence (as *Mary* laid up the sayings of *Jesus* in her Heart) there be those again who will hear with one Ear, and let it out with another, that it shall go off and be with them as a flash, and a noise, and as the Wind that passeth away.

Even so it will be at the end of things, and as to all the Generations and Persons of Mankind of all Coun-

treys and Places. *It is appointed to all to die.* This of necessity and force. Some of them did set their Houses in order, that is, their Souls in a readiness and meetness before they died. Others again did not set their Houses in order before they died, but they were careless and negligent as to that, till indeed Death came upon them. *He that feared the Word of the Lord amongst the Servants of Pharaoh made his Servants and his Cattel flee into the Houses* (which were hereby preserved) *and he that regarded not* (in the Margent here it is, set not his Heart unto) *the Word of the Lord, left his Servants and his Cattel in the Field, Exod. 9. 20, 21.* which were therefore destroyed. Even so it is here, he or they among the Inhabitants of the Earth, that feared the Word of the Lord, obeyed the Exhortation in our Text, and did set their Houses in order before they died; and those will be saved and preserved, for though they die, they shall live again. But such of the Inhabitants of the Earth as did not regard, nor set their Heart unto the Word of the Lord, the Exhortation and Command in our Text. They did neglect to set their Houses or their Souls in Order before they died, even these Souls shall perish and be destroyed; for though they shall never cease to be, but they also shall live again; yet it shall be only to receive and partake of Pain, Punishment and Misery.

SERMON

S E R M O N II.

Isaiah 38. 1.

— *Set thine House in Order, for thou shalt die, and not live.*

IN which words Two Things are to be considered,

First, A Duty enjoined, *Set thine House in order.*

Secondly, The Reason added and annexed, *For thou shalt die, and not live.*

As to the first, As when *David* was old and stricken in Years, and the Time drew nigh that he should die, he gives charge, and takes care who of his Children should succeed him in the Kingdom over *Israel*, as may be seen in the first and second Chapters of the first Book of *Kings*, which was a great and weighty Concern. So from that good and godly Example, as also from the common Practice and Usage of the World, we learn that it is both lawful and commendable, yea, it is the certain Duty as well as it is the Wisdom of each one according to his Station and outward Circumstances to

give charge and take care concerning the Righteous Distribution and Disposition of those Houses and Lands, Money or Goods to his Children and others to whom of Right it doth belong, as Sons, Daughters, Kinsfolks, Poor and such like. For as touching this the Word and Law of God hath Commanded and Directed, *Children are not to lay up for their Parents, but Parents for their Children.* He that provideth not for his own, and especially for those of his own House, hath denied the Faith and is worse than an Infidel. Neither will this be sufficient, available or acceptable with God, to be Righteous unto all others, and to be Unrighteous unto his own Children. For we may Read in *Romans* 1. 32. That those who are without Natural affection are there Ranked among the vilest and worst of Men. But contrariwise, *As a good Man will guide his Affairs with discretion,* Psal. 112. 5. in the midst of, and throughout his Life, so more especially he will do the same towards and before his Death. Even by so ordering his Matters by a Righteous, Equitable, Equal and Impartial Distribution of his Goods amongst them. As to give them no just Occasion for them to speak evil of him, nor yet for his Adversaries to speak Reproachfully; and to prevent before-hand Law-suits, Quarrelling, Hatred, between Brothers and Sisters, Kinsfolks and Neighbours and such like. As we often know and hear that these last evil things and inconveniencies do too commonly happen for want of People thus setting their Houses in order before they die.

To set the House in order is spoken by way of *Metonymy*; that is, to set the Things contained in the House in order, and that is Goods, as also Parchment Writings and Evidences concerning Lands; as we Read that *Jeremiah* did Seal and Subscribe unto them when he made the purchase.

But this Phrase of the Holy Ghost hath a further meaning than all this, even a Spiritual Sence and Signification, therefore I now proceed to explain and handle it in that Threefold sence and meaning, which the words will naturally bear without any forced or violent Construction made upon them.

As Man is usually considered in a Threefold Capacity, outward Estate, Body and Soul; of which two last he is made up and constituted, but the first is a thing appendant extrinsical and belonging to him: So to set his House in order doth denote these three things.

1st, To set his outward Estate in order.

2dly, To set his Body in order.

3dly, To set his Soul in order, for this is the most Principal thing. That all these are severally meant, included and intended when the Holy Ghost spake thus by *Isaiah* unto *Hezekiah*, *Set thine House in order*, will appear from other places of Scripture, which was given by Inspiration from God, as also from the very Nature and Reason of things.

It hath been observed, that it is a Man's Prudence to make his last Will and Testament in the midst of Life and Health, and to keep it always ready by him, For the Party is never the nearer Death for so doing, but only more ready and prepared for it. For in sickness there is Pain and Weakness enough to grapple withal which will employ the Mind and Sence; so that it is best to be troubled or perplexed as little as possible about Worldly and outward things, so from that manner of Speech of the Apostle *Paul*, *No Man that Warreth Entangleth himself with the Affairs of this Life*, 2 Tim. 2. 4. It is not said, he doth meddle at all but not Entangle, that is, not involve or Plunge himself in; for this is a mighty hindrance to the Things of God. So his real Servant, who is Faithful and Spiritual, as he doth not that throughout his Life; so from hence I have often thought

thought, that it is not only Godly Discretion and Soul-saving Wisdom, but indeed it is a happy and blessed condition, so to have ordered and settled all Worldly things before, *that when we come to Die indeed, then we may have nothing to do but to Die.* As Grace and Holiness should not then be for us to get just as we come to Die, but they should be gotten and had long before. Even so in like manner as to the disposition of this Worlds Goods, it will be expedient not to be distracted then about that business, but care also as to them should have been taken some considerable time before. For when one lies upon the Bed of sickness, or in the Extremity and point of Death there are other important things both of Body and Soul for to Mind and be busied about then.

2dly, The Second Branch of that Duty enjoyed, *set thine House in order*, is to set our Body in order. In 2 Cor. 5. 1. the Body in expresse words is called an *Earthly House*. For we know that if our *Earthly House* of this Tabernacle be dissolved, we have a *Building of God, an House not Built with Hands, Eternal in Heaven*. So this allows and justifies for our taking and interpreting the words of our Text in this sence also. *Set thine House in order*, that is, set the Earthly House of this Tabernacle, viz. the Body in order.

Now indeed there cannot be much said as to this, inasmuch as the Body is but as the husk or shell, and as a tenement of Clay. And how can it then be set in order just as it is going to dissolve and moulder into the Dust? But when the Holy Ghost doth in so particular a manner record, *And when Jacob had made an end of Commanding his Sons, he gathered up his Feet into the Bed and yielded up the Ghost*, Gen. 49. 33. By Faith Joseph when he died gave Commandment concerning his Bones, Heb. 11. 22. Gen. 50. 25. Now the Scripture saith nothing in vain. But hereby we

we learn that the Body is not only to be set in order throughout the course of its Life, by endeavouring to keep it in a state of Health, Sobriety, Temperance, Purity and Charity ! But even after its dissolution care is to be taken and order to be given beforehand concerning a decent Interment and Burial thereof. As these Bodies of ours are the Workmanship of God ; for indeed to those who understand and consider them thoroughly, they do appear to be a Noble, Excellent and Admirable Structure. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* But then especially as these Bodies of ours have a further Pre-eminence and Honour as to be the *Members of Christ, and Temples of the Holy Ghost which is in you.* And therefore Proportionably respect and concern is to be had unto them, that these *Members of Christ, and this Temple of the Holy Ghost* may be set in order before and after that we die.

When the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* takes particular notice, *By Faith Joseph when he died, gave Commandment concerning his Bones,* hereby he would shew forth unto us *Joseph's* belief at that very time concerning a future State and of the Resurrection. How that he had then a Faith and expectation, that those very Feet which his Father *Jacob* had gathered up into the Bed, as also his own Bones of his Body though now they were to become Dust and to be Buried, yet as he saith in the original place, *God will surely Visit you* (he means his Kinsmen, the Stock and Children of *Israel*) *and ye shall carry up my Bones from hence.* *Gen 50. 25.* As much as if he should have said, God will surely Visit us all, both my Kinsmen, Brethren, my self and all that shall descend from us (which afterwards were like the Stars in the Heaven, or the Sand on the Sea-shore for Multitude) and so all the Generations and Persons of Mankind, when *He that turneth Man to Destruction,* shall say

say, *Return ye Children of Men*, Psal. 90. 5. This is *Visiting* and doing somewhat more for them; and then those very same Bones of mine which I now take an Oath from ye that ye shall carry them up from hence, God will lay Sinews upon them, and bring Flesh upon them, and cover them with Skin and put Breath in them, and ye shall live and know that I am the Lord, Ezek. 37. 6. Which will be Literally fulfilled at the last Day. When this same Body and these same Bones, which is now seen to be lain and Buried in the Ground and turns to Corruption, and dissolution shall be raised up and be made whole and intire again in like manner (though it will be done more suddenly, for it shall be done in a moment, in a twinkling of an Eye, for the Trumpet shall Sound, and the Dead shall be raised Incorruptible and we shall be changed) as they were corrupted and dissolved. The Scripture all along and throughout is so very full and clear as to the Resurrection of the Body in a Literal sence, that it is to be admired how any that Name the Name of Christ or call themselves Christians, can deny or disbelieve it. Though I have heard and talked with some now-a-days, who just like *Hymeneus* and *Philetas* have Erred as concerning the Resurrection, saying that it is already past. For the only Resurrection, as some Erroneous People would have it, is a rising again to Newness of Life and in a Spiritual sence. True indeed, there is a rising to Newness of Life here that they may rise to the Resurrection of Life hereafter. And Blessed are they which have their part in this first Resurrection, upon them the second Death hath no Power. But besides this, the Scriptures do in divers places speak expressly and clearly of the Resurrection of the Body; and what God hath joyned together let no Man put asunder. So that they must be infidels and deny the Faith, who shall gainsay or disbelieve it.

As Jesus Christ proved the Resurrection of the Dead from that general expression in the Old Testament, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob*; then comes the Reasoning and Inference, *God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living*. And so if any one should go about to prove the Resurrection of the Body from this saying of *Joseph* upon his Death Bed, *God shall surely Visit you*; it might at first seem an hard matter to make it out from thence. Which notwithstanding will easily and clearly appear, if we attend unto and consider thoroughly that Reasoning and Inference, which lies as it were hidden within those very words. For though indeed and in truth these words according to the intent and meaning of *Joseph* when he then spake them, were a prophecy and foretelling that God would bring the Children of *Israel* from out of the Land of *Egypt* the House of Bondage unto that good Land, the Land of *Canaan*, which he had promised and Sworn unto *Abram* that begat them, that he would do. But as the Apostle saith by the Spirit concerning what befel the Sons of *Jacob* and *Joseph*, *All those things happened to them in a Figure*: So what God did and the several things Recorded of them, they are a Shew and Representation to us, they are a Type and Signification, that as the Lord God the Creator and Preserver, yea, and the Restorer of Mankind, did lead forth the Children of *Israel*, from out of *Egypt* through the Wilderness into the Land of Promise: So he did before that time and hath ever since, and doth continue to do so at this Day to lead all the Generations, yea and single Persons of Men and Women of every Nation, Countrey and Language from and throughout this Earth unto the Land of Promise the Heavenly *Canaan*, either to the New Heaven and New Earth where dwelleth Righteousness; or else to the Land of Darkness, of Dragons
and

and Scorpions, where the Shadow of Death and no Light is, the Inhabitation of Sin and Misery. Where every Son and Daughter of Men, and all the descendants from *Adam* and *Eve* shall be, after that we shall Die and are removed from hence.

But now I come to that inward Reasoning and Inference, which lies couched and included within those words of *Joseph*; and (Reader) do thou observe it. When we Die it is evidently seen that the Soul and Breath vanisheth and goes away and seems to be nothing at all. And so the Body or House of Clay putrifies and turns into common Earth and undistinguishable Dust, and consequently as good as nothing, or as nothing as to a Reasonable and Living Creature. Now what is absolutely nothing, cannot be properly the Object of God's care and concern; and what is not simply nothing, or as it were nothing, he doth not neither so much mind. Because that as God is a Being, or rather the Foundation, Root, Centre and Comprehensive of all Beings, he containing all things that are in himself. As the Divinely Inspired *Psalmist* saith, *His tender Mercy is over all his Works*. So of necessity it must be his work or being for to engage God's Conservation, care and concern about it. As we learn from *Heb.* 12. 26. Every least Word or Particle of Scripture is observable; for from out of it may be gathered some Truth and Signification: So that when we Read *Therefore Sprang there even of one, and him as good as Dead*, *Heb.* 11, 12. From hence we may Reason and infer, that when any one is Dead, he is then as we commonly say, as good as nothing. And inasmuch as *God is not the God of the Dead but of the Living*, therefore when *Joseph* spake thus by the Spirit, *God shall surely Visit you* (both himself included when he was just giving up the Ghost, as also his Brethren who were to Die a little afterwards, hereby must be meant and understood (as the last End and

and Event of things will most fully prove and manifest it) that God would both speak unto and also do somewhat for his Creatures, after that they are Dead and gone; and that is no other, but to raise up to Life again what before was Dead, and to give it a Being what before had no being, or at least as good as no Being. Our selves whilst here in life, do not usually go into the Grave or into a Charnel House to Visit Dry Bones; for when our friends and acquaintance are once Dead, if we are perhaps invited and go to their Funeral and accompany their Corps to the Ground, there is an end of all Visits as to them. And also unless we are Dumb or Mute or Ideots we never make a visit to any one, but we talk somewhat or another to him. And also when we Read of a Duty implied, of *Visiting and Ministering unto those that are Sick or in Prison*, Mat. 25. 43, 44. We may from thence learn that the end of all Visits unto People (seeing that much time is Squandred away herein amongst Rich People to impertinent talk and impertinent purposes) should be to be helpful one to another. For they in Sicknes or in Prison cannot so well help themselves; or to edifie one another; *Either to ask or Minister help shou^d be the End of all Visits.* Though here again the Humour and manner of this Corrupt World, is to say unto such as are in Want or Distress, *Depart in peace, be you warm and filled: But notwithstanding they give them not those things which are needful to the Body, what doth it profit?* James 2. 16. What do all their good and pitiful words signify which cost them nothing? People are very free of them, and of their fruitless Wishes, when they Visit People in Imprisonment or in Distress: Or they spend their Time in some vain, worldly Talk, without dropping one Word of Godly and Divine Conversation. But as God is infinitely greater and better than Man, so his Visits do as much differ from, and proportionably excel

cel theirs in Help and Benefit. For whereas Man says and doth not (which is sometimes for want of Power, and more commonly through Dissimulation, or for want of Will) God both says and doth. Our Good and Gracious God doth most effectually answer the true end of all Visits. For he never makes a Visit, where it is understood in a way of Love and Friendship (for the Scripture also makes mention of God's Visiting in a way of Anger and Punishment, as *Jer. 5. 9. Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this?*) But either he doth some good thing, or some helpful thing to those he visits. With God to say and to do, is one and the same thing. For he spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast. For hath he said, and shall it not come to pass? Yes, as surely as he ever said; though most commonly the one may be (according to his own Divine Method) some Thousands of Years before the other. From all which hath been afore-said on this Argument put together, it may be evidently concluded, That whereas God (the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who ordered and decreed him to be *put to death in the Flesh, but quickned by the Spirit, by which also he went and preached to the Spirits in Prison, 1 Pet. 3. 18, 19.*) shall surely visit all the Children of Men, who ever have or shall sleep in the Dust of the Earth; hereby it may be certainly gathered, that he will both say something unto them, and also do something for them. And what is that? Even to raise up their Bones again from thence, and to perform that in a Literal Sence, of all the Generations and Persons of Mankind of all Countreys which he hath said in the Thirty-seventh Chapter of *Ezekiel*, from the fourth to the fourteenth Verse; for when all the Men and Women of all Generations from the beginning of the World unto the end thereof, and of all Countreys and

Places

places throughout the habitable parts of the Earth, shall be raised up again all together, and as they shall live and stand upon their feet (even those very same feet which they had gathered up into the Bed, when they severally yielded up the Ghost) they will make an exceeding Great Army, as it is there said in *vers. 10. And ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your Graves, O my People, and brought you out of your Graves, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own Land*; (the meaning of which last Speech; is, That as Judas went unto his own place, so God will make but two distinctions, and place them severally in their own Land, even in the good Land (as there is of both sorts of these beyond the Grave, as well as on this side of it) according as their own Works or Deeds done in the Body, have been good or evil. Then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord, Ezek. 37. 13, 14. This again confirms what was aforesaid, for this speaking and performing both, is surely *visiting* according to the true nature and end thereof And such of ye, who shall hear or read these lines, who also shall be ranked in amongst that exceeding great Army, are my Witnesses; and some of ye perhaps may remember, (when ye shall indeed see it performed before your Eyes as the Lord hath spoken) that in this Book or Treatise of mine, according to the Knowledge and Understanding which God had given and opened unto me his Creature, I did rightly; and according to Truth, explain even in the most large and comprehensive sence as afore-mentioned, those words of dying Joseph, *God shall surely visit you.*

Seeing then that these Bones (it is a certain truth) which we now carry about us in the Body, and shall be laid in the Grave, and God himself shall carry or rather raise them up from thence, as also this whole Body of ours shall be raised incorruptible, and set in order

again, after that Death hath disordered it: The inference from all this, is natural and necessary, that there must be also some Act of our own according to the Ability and Power put into our Hand, to answer this Act of God's; namely, that we set this House of our Body in order before; for we shall die and be raised again. Remember it for a constant Rule, as there is expected our *working together with the Grace of God*, so still and all along there must be some Act of our own (according to the Grace he hath already given us, and according to the Power and Ability put into our Hands) to answer with God's Act on us Creatures. As when Jesus saith, *I go to prepare a place for you*, John 14. 2. to this we must endeavour by the Grace given us, to prepare our selves in the mean while for that place, even that we may be meet to be partakers of the *Inheritance of the Saints in Light*. Even so it is here in our present matter, though it hath been here declared, God will set our Bodies in order in the Resurrection and future State, as he did set them in order in his first Creation; and Workmanship of them. For this Body *was curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the Earth* (that is, in our Mothers Womb) *thine Eyes did see my Substance yet being unperfect, and in thy Book all my Members were written, which in continuance were fashioned.* (Observe here is an Orderly Work and Procedure by that God, who is the God of Order, and not of Confusion) so I say again, to this first and last Act of God's on these Bodies of ours, if we would indeed obtain and have part in the blessed Resurrection, it is required and expected of us, that according to what lieth in our power (though we cannot make one hair white or black, nor yet add one Cubit to our Stature) we should also in the mean while, set our Bodies in order also, even that we may keep them from Filth and Pollution, from Unruliness and Disorder.

But some will say, how must we keep or set these Bodies in order? This the Scripture teacheth, *For this is the Will of God, even your Sanctification, that ye should abstain from Fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his Vessel in Sanctification and Honour,* 1 Thes. 4. 3. By *Vessel*, is meant his Body, according to that other Scripture, *for we have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels*: But here it is said, *Possess his Vessel*. Perhaps it is not in our Trade, nor yet in our Power to make Vessels; (for that belongeth to the Potter; neither can he make them, unless he hath Clay brought ready to his hand; for Creation is the incommunicable Attribute of the Deity, and all Men's making is only fashioning, changing or altering, by bringing it into such a Form or Figure; for they must have some pre-existent matter to work upon, and there is no such thing as simple making in all the labour under the Sun, which is done by the Children of Men) but in this instance of possessing our Vessel, though we do not know how to make it, yet we may know how to keep this our Vessel sweet and clean. And so we may know how to keep and set these Bodies of ours in such order, like as we put Clothes on to Preserve them from cold, and as we put Victuals in them to keep them from hunger and famishing. Even so may any one refrain any longer from yielding his Members Servants to Uncleanness, and to Iniquity unto Iniquity. But that henceforth they yield their Members to Righteousness unto Holiness, Rom. 6. 19. The Apostle goes on to add in vers. 22., *But now being made free from sin, and become the Servants of God, ye have your fruit unto Holiness, and your end everlasting life.* From hence we learn, that to set these Bodies of ours in order, is to keep and preserve them from sin; for hereby we shall with them serve God. And what is the blessed consequent of all? *To have your fruit unto Holiness, and the end everlasting life.* This teaches and instructs in two things. First, That

That this doing, and thus setting them in order, is the way for God to set them in order in the Resurrection, in the day of Judgment, and the future Eternal State which succeeds after that. *An Holy Body, is an Orderly Body.*

In the second place, this proves and confirms, that as we do carry along with us, in these our Bodies, the Seeds of Mortality and Corruption: So if we have already, or can get Holiness ingrafted in them. This thing of Holiness, is a Seed of Immortality and Eternal Life; which the Man or Woman hath abiding in them, even at the very same time when he is in this life, which is as a Vapour, and continueth not.

To mention again the Apostle's Dehortation, *That ye yield not your Members Servants to Uncleaness, and to Iniquity unto Iniquity*; and as we naturally receive in Food, and put on Raiment to avoid Hunger and Cold; and as we would not willingly throw our selves headlong from an high Tower or Precipice, nor yet dash out our Brains against a Stone-Wall, nor run our tender Flesh upon sharp Iron Spikes; for in all these and alike Instances, this would be the ready way to break these our Earthen Vessels. And no Man that loves himself, or understands how precious they are, and what a precious Jewel is contained in them, would willingly have them broken, or dissolved before their time. So by the very same consequence, we should abstain from all appearance of Evil; but more especially and particularly, we should abstain from those Sins and Evils which sooner bring on Diseases and Death, than others. Agreeable to this, Christ Jesus, the Wisdom of the Father, and the Captain of our Salvation, hath given this word of Command, *And take heed to your selves* (the manner of expressing it is observable, take heed) *lest at any time your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and Cares of this life, and so that day come upon you*

at unawares. Now these three especially, Surfeiting, and Drunkenness, and Cares of this Life (besides that the two first do overwhelm and drown a Man, and the latter waste him out sooner) do expose to Sickness and sundry kinds of Diseases and outward Accidents; so that the day of Death comes upon such, who give themselves unto these sins, at unawares, or sooner than it would otherwise; to which succeeds the day of Judgment and of Account. So Adultery, Whoredom, and following the strange Woman, renders People weakly and short liv'd, and *brings rottenness into their Bones*, that their Body and their Flesh are consumed; as some of us have seen sad Spectacles, Examples, and Monuments thereof. So Anger, Wrath, Malice, Hatred, Variance, Envyings, set People together by the Ears, to Wound or Murder one another, when they go forth by Armies or single Persons. Covetousness and Idleness doth tempt them to Steal and Rob upon the High-way; which at length brings them to the Gallows. So indeed almost every Sin, one way or another, is a *Destroyer*; for it hastens sooner into the Pit of Destruction. And it is one of those *Paths of the Destroyer* mentioned in *Psal 17. 4.* even of Satan, the invisible Enemy of Mankind, who hath his Name in the Hebrew Tongue, *Abaddon*, and in the Greek, *Apollyon*. Both which in our *English* Tongue, signifies a *Destroyer*. Which he makes use of, to lead the Sons and Daughters of Men into the Chambers of Death; the very Pit and Brink of Hell, till at last they drop into it.

This place of *Psal 17. 4.* is so excellent and observable, and there is so much necessary and useful Truth contained in it; that it is worthy to be quoted out at length, for the Reader to meditate upon the significancy and the Word of Instruction which arises from thence: *Concerning the Works of men, by the Word of thy Lips have I kept me from the Paths of the Destroyer.*

As much as if *David* should say, let other Men do as they will, if they go on to destroy themselves, as we see the Works of Men are, and by their manner of acting abroad in the World they do; as for my part, I will make God's Word my Guide and my Rule; I will be sure to keep to that and not vary from it, and then I shall keep my self from the *Paths of the Destroyer*. I shall not be in those Paths which the Blood-thirsty and deceitful Men are in, who do not live out half their Days; and which those Sinners and Workers of Iniquity are in, who do not live out half their days; for if it had not been for that, they might have attained unto the Days of their Fathers. But this Rule doth not hold always, for sometimes the Wicked grow old and are mighty in Power; as *Job* saith. And then chiefly my Comfort is, as long as I hold my self to the Word of Gods Lips, not to turn aside from it, to the Right Hand or to the Left, thereby I keep my self from the Paths that lead to Hell, the Place of Destruction, which is on the other side of the Grave.

And so to preserve our Bodies from falling into that Place of Destruction, is to keep and set them in order; for to that end we should have them *ordered according to the Word of Gods Lips*. And this is according to the afore-quoted Place, *Rom. 6. 22.* to have them made free from Sin. *Let not Sin therefore reign in your mortal Boay,* ver. 12. *I beseech you Brethren by the Mercies of God, that ye present your Bodies a living Sacrifice, Holy* (mark that Epithet, *Holy*) *acceptable unto the Lord, which is your reasonable Service.* Know ye, that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you. *If any Man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the Temple of God is Holy,* (here we see again, how the Eternal Spirit, in a wonderful manner is all along Con-
stant to it self in promoting this thing of Holiness in us) *such Temple ye are.* And so it is elsewhere written,

Be ye clean that bear the Vessels of the Lord, Isa. 52. 11. And we carrying these earthen Vessels of the Lord, that is to say, our Bodies continually along with us; Having therefore these Commands and Instructions, Directions and Promises; Dearly Beloved, *Let us cleanse our selves* (here must be some Act of our own) *from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the fear of God.* And then, if this earthly House be thus set in Order, as to be free from Sin, and to be Holy; to be swept and garnished within, and kept so: And if we touch not the unclean thing, but be separate from all Evil and Defilement; then will be fulfilled and brought to pass what God hath said: *I will dwell in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my People.* Let us hear the summ and substance, the Conclusion of this particular Head of Discourse, set your Bodies in order. That hath been shewed, let your Bodies be ordered according to the Word of God's Lips; which requires that they be made free from Sin; and that they be kept and preserved continually in Sanctification and Holiness. The Reason is evident, Why Holiness in Particular must be had and ingrafted in the Body, before we die, because the end of Holiness is Everlasting Life.

3dly. By those Words, *Set thy House in order*; is denoted and shewn forth, that we set our Souls in order.

The Phrase, set thine House in order, is a *Metonymy*; for by the Name of the thing containing, is meant the things contained in that House; like as when mention is made of the Cup, which Jesus a little before He was betrayed, took Bread and gave thanks, and gave it to them; saying, *Drink ye all of this, Mat. 26. 27.* Thereby is intended not the bare outward Cup, but the Wine contained in that Cup. And so in like manner, this Phrase of the Spirit of God delivered by the Mouth of *Isaiah*, doth not so much signifie that *Heze-*

hiab should set the outward Walls of his Palace or dwelling House in Order; but rather his Household concerns, which were contained in that House; nay further, that Tenement of Clay wherein Himself did inhabit, his Flesh and Body, this He should set in Order. Nay, to come yet closer and nearer to himself, He should not so much set the earthly House of his Body in Order, this should be done; but yet much more, He should set the Inhabitant of that earthly House, *viz. His Soul in Order.*

Now what was commanded to *Hizekiah*, is the Duty of us all severally upon whom the ends of the World are come. The Soul is not our House, but the Inhabitant of our House; and from the like Analogy and Reason of Things, by the very same Interpretation and opening out of the Scriptures, which the Eternal Spirit in the penning and giving them forth hath designed therein; when He expresses the things contained therein, by the Word or Name of the thing containing. Therefore of necessity the Spirit of God did mean and intend thereby, when He saith, set thine House in Order, set thy Soul in Order; because that this Soul of ours is the Principal, and I may say the only Thing that is most Immaterial and Substantial, which is contained in this earthly House of ours.

If we compare *Mat. 16. 26. For what is a Man profited, if He shall gain the whole World, and lose his Soul?* together with *Luke 9. 25. where instead of his own Soul, it is thus written, What is a Man profited, if He gain the whole World and lose himself?* Now put both the e places together, and from them both it will undeniably follow, that the Soul is the Man himself. Manifest Reason, I will go on to add yet further, even very Sense teacheth the same; for we may understand and perceive, that the Body is just enlivened and made sensible, but is as it were a meer Trunk or En-

gine for the Soul to Act in. It is evidently seen, that the Body upon the Decease or Departure of the Soul from out of it, is just like an empty House, Tenement or Cottage without any Inhabitant at all in it; which as that thereupon doth fall into Ruin and Decay, without any one to mind or look after it; so the Body yet much sooner Moulders into Corruption, Stink and Dult. *Fear, and the Pit, and the Snare are upon thee, O Inhabitant of the Earth,* Isa. 24. 17. This is a most proper and apposite Expression of the Holy Ghost, to call us Inhabitants of the Earth. From whence I will go on to Remark yet further, that just like as Snails carry their Houses upon their Backs, even so we carry about the Houses of our Habitation (I mean this little Tenement of Clay, the Body) all along, and every where with us. We are wrapt up and covered all over with it. And it is a moveable walking *House, that hath not Foundations,* Heb. 11. 9. which herein is opposite unto and distinct from that City, *which hath Foundations,* there mentioned in the next following Verse. And also herein it is opposite unto and distinct from that *House Eternal in the Heavens,* spoken of, 2 Cor. 5. 1.

Now what we must do, or how to behave our selves, to set our selves (who inhabit and are contained within this earthly House) in Order, proceed we to shew according to that measure of Knowledge which our Creator hath given unto us. To *set in Order*, in one Sence is a kind of Speech which is used, when from out of a great mixed and confused Multitude of Men; these are Marshallled and put in order of an Army: And indeed, it is observed of a well Disciplined Army; that it is one of the most orderly things in the World, when each Officer and Souldier (notwithstanding their vast Multitude) knows and stands in his proper Place, Rank and File, not moving one Hands breadth from out of

it to the Right Hand or to the Left; and they do move and act nothing without Command or Order. And so when we read in *Joel* 2. 7, 8. *And they shall March every one on his ways, and they shall not break their Ranks, neither shall one thrust another, they shall walk every one in his Path*: Observe all this, for these things being so written and dictated by his Spirit, hereby we are shewn and instructed, how God is infinitely pleased and delighted with this thing of *Order* in his *Army*, and in the very great *Camp* (for so it is there called, *verse* 11. as indeed it is) of his Creatures or Created Beings.

And from hence I would observe and make known (though it may seem a little Digression, yet I shall soon again return to our subject Matter) that when the Scripture styles God in manifold Places of the Old Testament, the *Lord of Hosts*. It hath a much larger and more comprehensive meaning and signification herein, that as He was King in an especial Manner over the Children of *Israel* (for that Government was a more immediate Theocracy then over the other Nations) so He was their Chief Captain or General of their Armies or Hosts, and that He did fight their Battels in dispossessing their Enemies from out of it, and giving them the Land of *Canaan*. In Truth, in this Sence He was the *Lord of their Hosts*, as He did lead forth the Children of *Israel* by their *Hosts* from out of the Land of *Egypt*, and gave them Possession of the promised Land. And so in another Sence, inasmuch as we are to *Publish the Name of the Lord, ascribe ye greatness unto our God*, *Deut.* 32. 3. And forasmuch as an *Host* or *Army* is one of the greatest and most terrible things here living on the Earth, therefore when the Spirit or Spiritual Men would *ascribe greatness unto God*, they do in this manner express it by his being Lord, which signifies Chief Ruler, and that He hath Dominion and Authority over them, and that He is greater in Power, Strength, and Multitude than

than all of them put together. But chiefly, the largest, highest and most comprehensive meaning and signification of these Words ; the Lord of Hosts, seems to be taken from that great Place, in *Isa. 40. 26. Lift up your Eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their Host by number, He calleth them all by Names ; by the greatness of his might, for that He is strong in Power, not one faileth.* And so as He hath Created all these things, and bringeth out their Host by number : And as the Heavens and the Earth were finished by him, and all the Host of them, *Gen. 2. 1.* He is properly and truly in this great, noble and comprehensive Sence, Lord of the Hosts of his whole Creation ; which being many, are properly stiled, *Hosts* in the Plural number, to denote and set forth their Multitude. Now compare that Army we read of in Scripture of a thousand thousand, *2 Chron. 14. 14.* which was the greatest that we read of in common History ; for *Xerxes* had as many, with the Hosts of the whole Creation of God, either for bigness or Multitude ; and even they seem as a small Multitude of Grasshoppers. *It is He that sitteth upon the Circle of the Earth, and the Inhabitants thereof are as Grasshoppers ; that stretcheth out the Heavens as a Curtain, and spreadeth them out as a Tent to dwell in.* His divinely inspired Prophet hereby intimating, that the vast Body of the Heavens, which is ten thousand Times bigger than the Earth, with the whole Circumference, Longitude, and Latitude of it, is no more in comparison to the infinitely exceeding greatness of God himself, then the Heavens does exceed in bigness, the Curtains of any common Bed, or any usual Shepherds Tent. The making of any thing, doth give an absolute Right and Property in the thing it self to the maker thereof. And in this Sence God is Lord of all, even of the Heavens and the Earth, and all the Host of them, inasmuch as He Created them, and all things contained therein.

therein. It is now called the *King's Army*, and the *King's Host*; because that the King's Money pays them; whereby they are holpen unto, and furnished with Food and Clothes. But as the Lord saith, *All Souls are mine*. So all Armies and Hosts are his; because he Created and gave Being to the Horse and his Rider, and to all the several Creatures that are therein. He maketh Grass to grow for the Horses, Corn and Wooll for the Men. And as *David* saith, *The Earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof*, Psal. 24. 1. *The Silver is mine, and the Gold is mine, saith the Lord of Hosts*, Hag. 2. 8. Observe how fitly that Character, *The Lord of Hosts* succeeds after all the former. Though here again it may be observed, that the Rebellion and Disobedience of Mankind, will endeavour to thwart him herein; for by their good will, his peculiar Children and Servants shall have the least share therein, by the violent Spoiling, Grasping, and Oppression of others.

But now to return again into the way of our Discourse. As a King or a General doth go forth to view their respective Armies; and they order their Men to be drawn forth, and to stand in Battel Array, that out of them they might Detach and Pick out some Chosen Men for such a particular Action, or Enterprize they send them about. Even so, *The Lord looketh from Heaven, he beholdeth all the Sons of Men; from the place of his Habitation, he looketh upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth*. And now he calls out one to Death, and then again he calls another, and then a third, and so on. *The Stars in their Courses, fought against Sifera*. And as they above are seen and observed to be in their Courses, so it is expected and commanded by the *Lord of Hosts*, that all the Inhabitants of the Earth should stand and be in their Order. For as the Soldiers in an Army know not what particular Man the General will Detach and take out next. Even so we the Inhabitants
of

of the Earth, know not which of us the Lord our God will call out next by his Trumpeter or Messenger, Death: But this we certainly know, that we shall be called out every one of us, one time or another. When the General or Captain calls for a Man, and he is not to be found in his Order and Place, woe be to that Man; for he thereupon undergoes some Reproof, Punishment, or he is shot to death. And so in like manner, if our Souls are not set in Order before, and when God calls and requires them out from our Bodies, woe be unto those Souls, for the Reproof, Threatning and Punishment of God will befall them. Thus much is signified and to be understood from what is written, *And when the King came in to see the Guests, he saw there a Man which had not on a Wedding-Garment. And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a Wedding-Garment? And he was speechless. Then said the King to the Servants, bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall he weeping and gnashing of teeth.* From all this Parable, or rather Similitude afore rehearsed, whereby our condition here in this dying Body, in reference to the ever-living God over all, is truly set forth and shewn unto us; we learn, that to set our Souls in Order, is to get them in a readiness, or in a State of watching, or waiting an expectation against our Lord's coming and calling us, not knowing when it will be; and that we be sure to keep in our proper Place and Station, in our Course and Order he hath set us; to be a doing and finishing his Work which he hath employed us about: *That as the Son of Man left to every Man his Work, and Commanded the Porter to watch,* Mark 13. 34. so we may have the Blessing promised and pronounced, that when he cometh, he may find us so doing.

Another sence and signification of setting in Order, is taken from what *Paul* writes to *Titus*, 1. 5. *For this*
cause

cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, In the Margent there it is left undone. From hence it will appear, inasmuch as this Scripture was given forth by the same Spirit; that the meaning of the Spirit when he Commanded to set our Houses in Order, or as hath been interpreted, the Soul, the Inhabitant of this House in Order, is to set in Order the things that are wanting, or what are left undone. That is, I suppose, and gather, to fill up and supply what is wanting, and to do what is yet left undone. I do believe that this is the principal meaning of the Holy Ghost in the Text. For that of setting the Soul in a readines, is included in this. For if there is nothing wanting in the Soul, then it is in its proper Order, Station or Place. If there be nothing left undone, then certainly she is upon doing and finishing the Work, which the Lord God of Heaven hath given and committed unto her for to do.

And now, set your Thoughts, O Man, to work and upon the search. As *Paul* did for this Cause leave *Titus* in *Crete*, that he should set in Order the things that are wanting; even so the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the Earth, for this Cause leaves us a little longer here on the Earth, that we should set in Order the things that are wanting. Consider then thoroughly, and bethink your selves well, what things are now wanting to your Salvation, there be sure to supply and fill them up before you die: and what things are left undone, there be sure to do and perform the same. And still if ye can apprehend any thing more, there also go and do likewise.

I am greatly afraid that *Mene Tekel* is not the Writing which was against *Belshazzar* of old time; but also it lies against every one of us at this day. I am sure and sensible, that it lies against my self, and so it will appear, that it lies against all the Sons and Daughters
of

of Men, When God shall enter into Judgment with them, for in his sight shall no Man living be justified. This is the Interpretation of these two words, *Mene Tekel*. See Dan. 5. 26. 27, when it is applicable to common Persons. *Mene*, God hath numbered the days of thy life, and finished them. This is certainly true, and will be found true. *Tekel*, Thou art weighed in the Ballance, and art found wanting. This last comes directly to our Subject matter, and will be found true also; when the Actions of the best Saints and Servants that were ever on this Earth, (I will not except the Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles, who yet are all in the Kingdom of God, but only excepted Jesus Christ the Righteous) are weighed in the Ballance of his strict and just Judgments. Their Actions are not so good as they might have been. For all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God, Rom. 3. 23. For the Lord is a God of Knowledge, and by him Actions are weighed, 1 Sam. 2. 3. And so he knows where, and in what point such and such Actions are wanting. Though we his Ministers and Creatures, by reason of our half imperfect and outward Knowledge, cannot presently assign it. The Actions of all the Children of Men will be found wanting in the Knowledge, Sight and Judgment of the Lord; yet they should not be found wanting in our own Knowledge, Sight and Endeavour. But we should still press and labour to come up to that State whereof *Paul* speaketh as to himself; I know nothing by myself, yet I am not hereby justified. That is, he knew no sin or fault which he allowed himself in, and no Duty which he left undone. And such a State may any Christian now-a-days (by that common Grace which God usually gives) arrive unto, if he will. Though *Paul* was thus Innocent, Upright and Obedient, yet he going on to add that hereby he was not justified; that is, before God. This confirms the truth of what was aforesaid; that

that though we do to the very best that ever we can, endeavouring and labouring to the very utmost that our Actions be not found wanting, until they seem to us as if they were not wanting, yet still in the future Judgment of God, they will be found wanting. The reason whereof is, *For the Lord seeth not as Man seeth, for Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart.* So the Lord knoweth not as Man knoweth, for Man knoweth the outward appearance, only by halves and imperfectly: But the Lord knoweth the inside and throughout, even all that is to be known in any thing. For the Lord is a God of Knowledge, and by him Actions are weighed. Nevertheless, the Lord doth require of, and command us to do our very best, though when we have done all that is commanded us, we are but unprofitable Servants; and we are to use our utmost, and continued diligence, that we be not found wanting; though after all, and at the last, we shall be found wanting. This seems to be the turning and deciding point; why some will be saved, and others will be condemned at the last day. The Souls of those that shall be saved, did, whilst they were here in the Body, and in the days of the Flesh, labour and endeavour with all their strength, and with all their might, (as *Jacob served Laban* with all his might) that they should not be found wanting. That nothing should be wanting in them, towards obtaining their own Salvation. They did *run, strive, and fight* (as the Scripture Phrases are) in doing whatever they could, if by any means they might obtain unto the Resurrection of the dead. And so God (who doth not lay upon Man more than is right) doth accept of this their good mind, and good will towards him. He will not expect from a Creature more than he is able; so such are received by him, they are admitted, and do enter into their Master's Joy.

But contrariwise, the Souls of them that shall be condemned, possibly they might seek to enter in at the strait Gate; that is, use a little careless, idle, and customary endeavour, but they did not *strive*, Luke 13. 24. for then they would have entred in. Neither did they use their continued labour and utmost diligence, that they should not be found wanting. It was a thing which they did a little, but not much mind; for now it is evidently seen and known in the World, that though all do pretend to serve God, and they say, that they hope to go to Heaven; yet some do more towards it than others. Whereas the Kingdom of Heaven will never be obtained by a parcel of lazy and outward customary Worshippers. For from the days of *John* until this time, the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Heaven and Immortality are for those who *strive*, who are *stedfast*, *unmoveable*, *always abounding in the Work of the Lord*, the labour of such is not vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. 15. 58. who *seek diligently*, Heb. 11. 6. who make it their constant business throughout their life. As in *Acts* 28. 24. *Some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not.* Some obey the Word, and some do not. So it is here, some will use their utmost diligence and labour, that they be not found wanting; and these will be accepted by God, and saved. Others again will not use their utmost diligence and labour, that they be not found wanting; and these will not be accepted by God, for they will be Condemned by him and perish. *They are weighed in the Ballance, and are found wanting.* And that Lott and Portion they might have had in the Heavenly Inheritance; is divided; and given unto others.

S E R M O N III.

Isaiah 38. 1.

— *Set thine House in Order, for thou shalt die, and not live.*

IThath been already said, That to set our Souls, in Order before we die, or before our Souls go out of our Bodies, is to take care and provide that nothing be wanting in them. But I find and gather from out of the Scriptures of Truth, That another main Principal and Essential thing wanting in the Souls of Men and Women, is, that they do not *lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset them*, Heb. 12. 1. from whence we learn, that to supply and fill up what is here wanting, is to actually lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us. And to *resist unto Blood striving against sin*, v. 4. This expression doth denote as much, as till the Blood spurts and gushes forth. Truly to lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and to resist unto Blood, striving against sin, are very great Lessons. Soon indeed learned, so as to have the Conception, Notion, and Knowledge thereof,

thereof; but very hard to be put in practice, and to be done accordingly. Yet it may be done; for if it had been impossible, God would not have Commanded and Required it, for his Commandments are not grievous and *He will not lay upon Man more than is right, that he should enter into Judgment with God*, according as it is said in *Job*. We shall indeed wish that we had done all this when we come to die. Now, it being a Mans Prudence and Wisdom to do so throughout ones life, as he shall indeed wish that he had done when he comes to die, And again, it being certain that we shall indeed wish and desire when we come to die, (suppose we were to die at this very moment, should we not indeed wish and desire it? I for my part should, and so would others also; for through want and neglect thereof do sensibly arise greater fears) that we had laid aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us. and that we had resisted unto Blood, striving against sin; it follows, that it is our Duty and Wisdom, to set about that Work instantly and presently: to endeavour and labour therein, throughout the course of all our remaining days.

When there is too little weight, we usually say, there is somewhat wanting; but here it is wanting in the Soul, because there is too much weight, even because it is of that sort which should not be, viz. the weight of Sin, Guilt, and Corruption. *And I said, what is it? And he said, this is an Ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover, this is wickedness, and he cast it into the midst of the Ephah, and he cast the weight of the lead upon the mouth thereof, Zech. 5. 6, 7, 8.* By this resemblance, the Holy Ghost doth signifie and set forth, That wickedness or sin, is like unto a talent of lead mentioned ver. 7, or a weight of lead, ver. 8. which is heavy, and abides upon the Soul of him that hath contracted and committed the same.

This place of *Hebrews*, 12. 1. *Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us*, is a kind of Speech and Direction taken from the manner and practice of Footmen. Who when they are to run a Race for a Price or Wager, they are so far from carrying any heavy thing or luggage in their Pockets, that on the contrary, they do usually strip themselves even of their necessary and wonted Clothes and Apparel, lest even that should be too great a weight and hindrance unto them, And so they run either naked, or with a light Linnen Garment cast or wrapt about them, to the intent they may be as nimble and expedite as ever they can. And so when I reflect and consider upon this thoroughly, and also compare with it what I find written, *And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in Mount Hor, by the coast of the land of Edom, saying, Aaron shall be gathered unto his People. Take Aaron and Eliezer his Son and bring them up unto Mount Hor, and strip Aaron of his Garments. And Moses stripped Aaron of his Garments.* Numb. 20. 23, 24, 24, 26, 28. though indeed it was to put them on *Eliezer* his Son, yet God in commanding, and the Holy Ghost in recording that it was so done accordingly; to strip *Aaron* of his Garments before he died. Though it was not altogether so sad and Melancholly unto *Aaron*, as now it is to a poor Malefactor to see and feel himself stripped or unbuttoned before his Execution. But this was also some punishment of *Aaron's* sin, for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the Children of *Israel*, because he rebelled against my Word at the Waters of *Meribah*, v. 24. All this doth carry a Signification, Instruction, and Admonition to us upon whom the ends of the World are come for our selves or others to strip off our Garments before we die. All one as we usually strip off our Garments when we go to Bed, which is an Emblem or

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Resemblance of the Grave. Or as soon as People are dead, they are usually stripped off from their Clothes, when they are laid out. But that is done by force when know not and cannot help it. But to do it before we die, this is the Will and Requiring of the Lord God; and this stripping off our Garments is one kind of setting our Souls in Order before we die. As *Moses* stripped off *Aaron's* Garments (now *Moses* was the Minister of God) so it is the business of the Ministers of God, or rather of the Ministry of his Word to strip People off from their Garments before they die. But what kind of Garments are they that are to be stripped off? For there is a good kind of Garments which we read of even the *Garments of Salvation* and the *Robe of Righteousness*, Isa. 61. 10. Are People to be stripped of these? In no wise, But rather they are to be stripped of another sort that these may be put on. For as *Joseph of Arimathea* craved the Body of Jesus, and he bought *fine linnen* and took him down, and wrapped him in the linnen. And as we know the manner of us is to bury, only to strip off such Clothes which the Person weared whilst living, and to wrap the Body in clean or fine linnen Cloth according as the outward condition of the Party deceased is, whether rich or poor, or in a Shroud or woollen Cloth: Even so God doth expect that against the time and as soon as ever we are stripped off from those kinds of Garments hereafter mentioned, that to them it may be granted that they should be arrayed in *fine linnen clean and white*; for the *fine linnen* is the *Righteousness of Saints*, Rev. 19. 8. But those kinds of Garments, which the Ministers of God or rather the Ministry of his Word is to strip People of, to the intent to set their Souls in Order before they die, are of two sorts. The first we read of in *Jude 23*, *Hating even the Garment spotted by the Flesh*.

The second or rather (both of them summoned up together) we read in *Isa. 64. 6.* *But we are all as an unclean thing, and our Righteousness as filthy Rags.*

So that the *Garment spotted by the Flesh, the unclean thing*, and also *Self-Righteousness*, denoted by this Phrase of the Holy Ghost *our Righteousness*, are the two principal Garments (and so must be done of whatever is like unto them) which the Soul must be stripped of before she goes out of the Body, that she may be set in Order, and to the intent that she may be found comely, meet and acceptable in the sight of God, when this Spirit of ours is to return to the God that gave it.

It is commonly and truly said, *That it is a great thing to die.* And so indeed it will appear, notwithstanding that the most and generality of People, who are in the broad way that leadeth unto Destruction, make no more of it than barely to undergo it when it comes, as if there was no more than to yield up the Ghost, and surrender up their Breath when they can no longer hold it in. In truth there is no great matter to die as People usually die, to slip and descend down into Hell. But to die as indeed we ought to die, (*sed Revocare Gradum superasque ascendere ad Auras, hic labor, hoc opus est*) that we may ascend up above, and be received up into the Mansions above, here is labour and work, here is matter enough for all our life foregoing, let us do and endeavour, and labour as much as ever we can.

If I should here go about to describe what it is, to strip off these Garments spotted with the Flesh, to put away the unclean thing, and to renounce all our self-Righteousness, I am apt to think that I shall pencil and set it forth in higher Perfections and Attainments than People will reach and arrive unto. And yet let me say what I can concerning it (even according to the Ability and Knowledge God hath given me) it will come far short of what is the meaning and requiring of God far in it, and concerning

concerning it, whereby also it will be seen, *Thy Word is very pure, therefore thy Servant loveth it*, Psal. 119. 140. The consequent to which is to hate, yea and strip off the Garment spotted by the Flesh. Some may here be apt to say, such a State of Holiness, Christianity, and fear of the Lord is too wonderful for me, it is high, I cannot attain to it. If none will go to Heaven but such Precise, Mortified and Self-denying People, Lord have mercy upon us. For what will become of us? Notwithstanding this or the like imagination and saying so frequent in the Mouths of People when they hear strict and hard sayings drop from the Preachers Mouth, who can bear them? Yet I say and testifie again, there is no making our Calling and Election sure (Heaven is such a great and lasting Good that we can never make too sure of it, and Hell is so sore and abiding an Evil that nothing can be done too much to avoid it) without coming up to these Perfections and Excellencies, and higher degrees of Grace and Knowledge, of Holiness and Innocency which the Scriptures do any where speak of or set forth. *And truly we should purchase to our selves a good degree and great proficiency in the Christian life, and in the Faith which is in Christ Jesus, if we have already used the Office of a Deacon well*, 2 Tim. 3. 13. That is, if we did learn and behave our selves well enough in the lower Forms of Christ's School, as to be still coming up and making towards the higher, yea the top and highest of all. As indeed the very top and highest pitch of Christianity and Faith attainable here on this Earth, is set forth by those kinds of words that lie before us, of *hating even the Garment spotted by the Flesh, of laying aside every weighs, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, of resisting unto Blood stirring against sin*. Shew me any stricter Gospel Precepts, or higher Advancements towards the likeness of God and of Christ. For this is certain, the more like unto

God any one becomes, the more he doth love Good, and the more he doth hate Evil. *Ye that love the Lord, hate Evil*, Psal. 97. 10. Now this is an hating of Evil with a perfect hatred, when we do not only hate, loath, and have indignation against Evil, but we hate every thing that is in the least stained, tinged, and spotted with the Evil. Nay, yet further, this is true hating of Evil, when although the Flesh is not simply and absolutely evil, yet it being the Ground or Soil, where this Evil the Poysonous Herb grows and springs up, we do not only hate the Poysonous Herb it self, but even the very Ground that bears it, and round about for its sake. When in our Thoughts and Soul the Ground is by us accursed for its sake. That although no Man hates his own Flesh but loves and cherisheth it (as the Scripture witnesseth and God would have it so in the State of Innocency) yet because of the Body of Sin dwelling therein, and because that Evil and Corruption doth root setle and spread it self forth there we hate our own Flesh therefore, and could almost destroy it; which we must not neither, though here we are Commanded also *Mortifie your Members which are on the Earth. If thy right Hand offend thee, cut it off: if thy right Eye offend thee, pluck it out.* And even we are to loath and detest those Members, which have been yielded *Servants to uncleanness, and to Iniquity unto Iniquity.* The Flesh lusteth and liveth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the Flesh, as may be seen in the seventh and eighth Chapter to the Romans, *For when we were in the Flesh, the motions of sins which were by the Law, did work in our Members,* (and by the like consequence of that of *Jude*, of hating even the Garment spotted by the Flesh, we ought to hate our Members because of the motions of sins in them) *to bring forth Fruit unto death.* But now we are delivered from the Law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and

and not in the oldness of the Letter, Rom. 7. 5, 6. For they that are after the Flesh do mind the things of the Flesh, but they that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the Flesh, cannot please God. There is no need of citing more places of Scripture (these being sufficient and expresse to the purpose) to shew that the Flesh is distinct, contrary and opposite unto the Spirit. And also the reason of not only hating, but even stripping off the Garment spotted by the Flesh, to set the Soul in Order before she goes out of the Body, will easily appear.

By the way it is not proper nor yet a true expression to say that the *Soul doth die* when it goes out of the Body; for indeed it doth not die but depart. But this is certain and evident that when she goes out from the Body, she is then stripped off from that Garment of Flesh in the general, that is, the Body. For the Soul goes upwards and gets out from, and lays aside the Body, which then seems as the Mantle that fell from *Elijah* at his going up to Heaven, and then she becomes all and pure Spirit.

Now as aforesaid, the Flesh in it self simply, and abstractedly is not Sinful nor Evil. For it was not so in its Original and first Creation. But after that *Adam* fell into the transgression, all his Children and Descendants from his Loyns are conceived in Sin and brought forth in Iniquity. And they are polluted in their own Blood, Ezek. 16. 6. as soon as they are brought forth from their Mothers Womb. So that this Flesh of ours is become a Seed plot of all manner of Sin and Evil. Like Leaven, doth leaven the whole lump, so it hath spread and diffused it self throughout the whole Flesh and every part thereof. From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores. Indeed Man was at first
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the work of God's own hands, and truly a noble Creature. Yet had I planted thee a noble Vine, wholly a right Seed, how then art thou turned into the degenerate Plant of a strange Vine unto me? Jer. 2. 21. But since that, by his Fall he is turned topsie-turvy over what he was then. For now he is become Universally corrupt throughout. Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. So that until he is renewed again after the Image of him who Created him, which is in Righteousness and true Holiness, he stands not only distinguished from, but as it were in perfect contrariety unto God. Said our Saviour to one of his Disciples, *Get thee behind me Satan, thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of Men.* As if the things which did only favour of Men, were a stink and evil smell and a smoke in his Nose, Isa. 65. 5. which he could not endure, and would have behind and far from him. And so it is all one of the things which favour of the World and the things that favour of the Flesh; the infinite Holiness and Uprightness of God is in no wise reconcileable unto them, nor yet doth approve of them. For they are all bad and nought, they being either the receptacle of Sin and Evil, or at least they have a smell, taste and tincture thereof, which the Holy and Pure God doth not like. In this sense it is (not as some of the ignorant and foolish Popes did from thence forbid Priests to Marry) *That they that are in the Flesh, cannot please God,* Rom. 8. 8. for the Flesh as it is now, is either Sinful or Evil it self, or it hath a favour of Sin and Evil. And it is the Will of God that we should come out even from that.

By what hath been afore said, it may be understood what it is to hate and strip off from us the Garment spotted by the Flesh, that is, spotted by the Sin or Evil which doth usually lodge and dwell in the Flesh. And care should be all one taken as to this, as we would not willingly

willingly have next to our Skin any linnen cloth where-
 in some poysonous Herb or Flower hath been lately
 wrapped up; or as we would not of our good will
 and choice wear the innermost Garments soon and im-
 mediately afterwards of one that hath died of the
 Plague; or as we would not drink out of a Glas before
 it is thoroughly washed and rinsed, in which we knew
 there was immediately before yellow Arfneck or any
 other most deadly Poyson. As we naturally fear and
 avoid all these, so if we were Spiritually minded, we
 would take as much heed of the World and of the Flesh,
 although we are in the midst of the one, and wrapped
 up and encompassed about with the other. But to be in
 the World and not of the World, *That by these you
 might be Partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped
 the Corruption that is in the World through Lust.* From
 whence it follows that it is impossible to be a Partaker of
 the Divine Nature, unless one hath first escaped the
 Corruption that is in the World through Lust. So
 again, as long as we are in the Body, we are in one
 fence in the Flesh; and accordingly the Scripture calls
 the time of this life the days of our Flesh. But as long as
 we do not obey, yield, nor give way unto the motions
 of sins that are in the Flesh; If we keep under and crush
 even Concupiscence which is the beginning of Lust, and
 so the beginning of each sin, or the tendency to each
 sin; if we make not Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the
 Lusts thereof. It is not here said to satisfy the neces-
 sities thereof, but the Lusts, which are excrefcencies
 and superfluities and needless things, so long we are
 safe enough as to the Flesh; for though we are in the
 Flesh, yet we walk not after the Flesh.

The World and the Flesh for the most part in Scrip-
 ture sense are taken for the Evil thereof, for the Rea-
 sons afore assigned. Because Sin and Evil hath its
 Root, Being and Dwelling in them, and they are the
 occasion

occasion thereof God hath therefore suffered, yea and placed us in the midst of them, both for our greater Proof and Tryal, to prove us to know what is in our heart, whether we will keep his Commandments or no. By our being in the World and the Flesh, and yet to be kept innocent and free from the Evil thereof, is just like treading upon Coals and not be burnt; which requires much and constant speed, skill and care. Now for a season (God having thought fit that it should be so) we are encompassed about with and very near to manifold Temptations arising from the World and the Flesh and the things thereof. That the Tryal of our Faith, Obedience, Holiness and Innocency might be had. Which if it be retained for all, *It is much more precious than of Gold that perisheth; though it be tried with fire, and so it will be found unto Praise and Honour and Glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.*

The Word of God is very Spiritual and Heavenly; for it doth teach us (as we may find by the Instructions scattered up and down therein) that when a great deal of our life is spent and the day of Immortality is at hand, and we begin to move off from the Stage of this Earth, like as when Soldiers have a mind to draw off from besieging a City of their own accord, thinking that either they cannot obtain or it is not worth their while to obtain it, then they draw off their Carriages, Burdens and Instruments of War before they march off themselves. So it is where they do it with advisedness, and deliberation, and they have sufficient strength. Even so, many of the things of this World and of the Flesh we cannot obtain which we would; and if we could, we cannot hold or continue to have them; for we die and go away. Or if we could, yet they are not worth the holding, because as yet God doth not commit unto us the *true Riches*, Luke 16. 11. that is, the true and abiding Happiness, for it is not to be had.

had in this World, but in the World to come wherein we seek and do expect it. Here then is the mind that hath Wisdom, to draw off our desires not only from the Sin and Evil (for we should be perfectly listless and dead as to them. *And if Christ be in you the Body is dead because of Sin*, Rom. 8. 10.) But also our desires should be drawn off utterly, even from the lawful necessary and indifferent things of this World. We should be as if we used them not, temperate in all things and get above them. We are commanded, not only to commit any unclean thing. But not so much as to touch the unclean thing. Which is standing as much at a distance from it as well as we can. So the Word of God, which is very pure, hath provided against all manner of Sin, and to abstain from all appearance of Evil, to take this care, even as to prevent the first beginnings, rise, and occasion of Sin or Evil.

Thus to Hate and Strip off the Garment spotted by the Flesh, as is before explained; and to lay aside every weight, and the Sin that doth so easily beset us, and to resist unto Blood striving against Sin, all those Expressions come to one and the same thing. That is, to set up again Innocency and Holiness in the Soul, after it had by the fall of *Adam* (by whose Transgression many were made Sinners) lost and defaced them. And this is to set the Soul in Order before we die, or before she goes out of the Body. It being a taking care that nothing is wanting in her, as indeed it would be a very great want, if she was not renewed again after the Image of him who created her, that is, in Righteousness and true Holiness.

It hath been aforesaid, That to set our Bodies in Order was that they might be made free from Sin, for an Holy Body is an orderly Body : Even so it is here an *Holy Soul is an orderly Soul*, or to get Holiness (which is the Image of God) ingrafted and implant-

ed in her, is to set the Soul in order, for then it is meet for his Acceptance, who is the Father of Spirits and Lover of Souls. Inasmuch as Holiness is the Image of God, and every like loves its like. *With the pure thou wilt shew thy self pure.* What sets the Body in Order, as Holiness doth that, the same Holiness doth set the Soul in Order also, for they are both united in one and make up the same Man, and they desire the same end, which is Happiness, *The High way to which is the way of Holiness.* The Body indeed must go through more Alterations; and it shall be raised up again to partake of Happiness or Misery. According to this very same Truth and Observation, *Paul* prays by the Spirit; *And the very God of Peace sanctifie you wholly, and I pray God, your whole Spirit and Soul and Body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you who will do it,* 1 Thess. 5. 23, 24. Good God? What comfortable and encouraging Words are here? From this Place of being preserved blameless, and from what we read in *Rom. 6. 22.* *Of being made free from Sin, ye have your Fruit unto Holiness:* We see hence, that Sin and Holiness are as Incompatible Things as Darknes and Light. They are perfectly and properly contraries; the Nature of which is to expel one another; and one succeeds the other, for as when the Sun sets and the Light goes off from the Earth, then Darknes comes and succeeds. And so when the Sun arises again, it drives off Darknes from the Face of the Earth; so it is as to Sin and Holiness: There is no arriving at Holiness without being made free from Sin: As again when Holiness goes off or is defaced, then Sin succeeds and creeps in of course. It is nonsense and a contradiction to say, that People lead an Holy Life and Conversation (although they seem outwardly Religious) when they are yet in their Sins, or when they serve divers Lusts
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and Pleasures. For Darknes may be as truly called Light (which would be a great absurdity and impossibility) as to think or say, such are an Holy People. *Woe unto them that call Evil Good and Good Evil, that put Darknes for Light and Light for Darknes, that put Bitter for Sweet, and Sweet for Bitter, Isa. 5. 20.* And whereas the divinely inspired Prophet goes on to add, *Woe unto them that are wise in their own Eyes, and prudent in their own sight,* vers. 21. Hereby He seems to meet tacitely with a sort of People, which are common and many now in the World ; They make up nine parts in ten in the visible Church. Who do not care nor heartily endeavour to come clearly out of Sin ; nor yet can they gainsay and renounce Holiness quite, inasmuch as glorious things are spoken of it, and precious Promises are made and annexed unto it. And therefore, they are for a kind of Life, which is made up (as they fashion and imagine to themselves) of a mixt medly of Sin and Holiness (as twilight is made up of Darknes and Light) and they think that this will serve their turn with God ; so as they hope for his acceptance of them, although they are sinful also ; because they do love and esteem of Holiness. But God answers such by his Spirit, *Woe unto them that are wise in their own Eyes, and prudent in their own sight ;* as to think to compound the matter with God. No such matter. For He that commanded, *Thou shalt not sow thy Land with divers kinds of Seeds,* nor yet *make a Garment of Linssey Woolsey ;* when such a judicial Law was given forth of old Time, the Holy Ghost hereby signifies even in these days, that God will never accept of such a medly, or mixt kind of Goodness or Righteousness, as is made up of Sin and Holiness, which is properly no Goodness or Righteousness at all. As it is written, *But they like men have transgressed the Covenant,* Hos. 6. 7. That is, it was like and such as could be expected from them. Even so

so this sort of mixt medly Goodness or Righteousness, is like Mans Goodness and Righteousness, which is a corrupt and imperfect thing at best; and that *our Righteousness* spoken of in *Isa. 64. 6.* which is as *filthy Rags*, which People are to be stripped utterly off to set their Souls in Order before they die; or otherwise God will not accept them. For that is an offence unto him, and He commands to get behind him, what favours of Men. But God hath yet much more clearly answered all these Imaginations and Devices of Men in that Gospel Command and Direction, *As He which hath called you is Holy, so be ye Holy in all manner of Conversation,* 1 Pet. 1. 15. Be sure to take in here the Particle, *As*, and then as to this Point, we will pursue the same Reasoning which the Apostles uses in the following Verses, forasmuch then as ye know that God is Holy, without the least mixture or tincture of Sin or evil. As Christ the Lamb was without Blemish and without Spot, *verse 19.* it must follow of consequence, that none is Holy as He which hath called you is Holy, if there be a mixture or tincture of Sin therein; and as the same Holy God our Father, who without respect of Persons judgeth of every Mans Works, it follows of necessity also, that He will never accept of such a kind of Holiness in any Man or Woman whatever, where Sin or Evil make up any part thereof. Though here also, if in our Holiness there should not be any tincture or favour of Sin or Evil (which also will be washed away in the Blood of the Lamb without spot and blemish before it is right and meet for the acceptance of God) we may be indeed amazed and afraid, and ask the Question, who then will be saved? Remember this I beseech the Reader. Sin must in no wise make a part or ingredient in that kind of Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord. Or if a Man or Womans Holiness at the best hath a tincture,

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smell or taste of Sin, Corruption or Evil; here He or She are to hate even the Garment spotted by the Flesh. They are to wish it were otherwise, though of themselves they cannot quite rinse and wash it out, but here pray unto God, *Wash me thoroughly from my Iniquity, and cleanse me from my Sin*, Psalm 51. 2. And though something may be done towards that here on this Earth, by their working together with the Grace of God which He gives unto them, till they in a manner empty all the Lees and Sedement out of the Vessels. But as to the taste, smell and scent of the Cask (here with Reverence be it spoken) Christ must give his own immediate helping hand; that the Soul may appear before God cloathed in the Righteousness of his Son; *And be found in him, not having mine own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ; the Righteousness which is of God by Faith, not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after*, Phil. 3. 9, 12.

And so in the Name of God, *Let us go on to Perfection*, Heb. 6. 1. Let us attain as far as ever we can in this Life and on this Earth, and follow after whatever we can apprehend more. *Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him*, 2 Cor. 5. 9. Resolving still to do our Duty in all things, and to fulfil all Righteousness, and whatsoever we can conceive or think off, confirming all the Words of his Law and Gospel by our doing of them; that we may have the favour and acceptance, the Peace and Reconciliation of our God. *Unto which Promise our Twelve Tribes incessantly serving God Day and Night hope to come*, Acts 26. 7. And where in any other places of Scripture we read of the more strict Rules, Directions, and Precepts, there to Copy them out by our own Example. Am I such an one? or do I thus and thus as is there written? As for instance when we find *Paul speaking in this wise*, *I*

know nothing by my self, yet I am not hereby justified. Can we say this of our particular selves also? And so when David makes his appeal unto God, *Search me O God, and know my Heart, try me and know my Thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way Everlasting*, Psalm 119. 23, 24. What earnestness of Expression is here, as much as if He should have said, do thou discover to me any Sin or Error in me, and I will resolve to get out of it: So fain would I to be in the way Everlasting. As thou hearest or readest this, commune with thy self, and examine thy self; Whither the same Mind, Desire and earnest Endeavour be in thee also? And so when we read, that *Paul trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Acts 9. 6. This carries Instruction to thee also, to be in the fear of the Lord all the day long, with a great awe and dread of him continually upon thy Heart, and to wait upon him in thy Spirit, to know and receive from him what the Invisible God our Creator and Governour would have thee O Man or Woman to do. And where He answers and makes known unto thee, there always from time to time to instantly and forthwith set upon doing the same. And so on, of whatever thou canst apprehend more; for as long as thou dost this there will be nothing wanting in thee; which indeed is to set the Soul in Order before we die. It is a great thing, and well-pleasing and acceptable unto the Lord, to answer all his requirings in thy Heart and Conscience, and to make this return, *The Lord opened my Ears, and I was not rebellious*. Where He speaks in the still Voice of his Word and Spirit, there to obey and do accordingly. And so indeed we might run through all Scripture, the Book of Life, which is given to make us wise unto Salvation, to apply all the sayings therein to our selves, and to ask our own Souls, How they perform or do the same.

. To return back to that aforementioned, *Let us lay aside every weight, and the Sin that doth so easily beset us. Ye have not resisted unto Blood, striving against Sin.* Here commune with thy self, prove and examine thy self O Man. Doth thy Soul or my Soul imitate the practice and usage of Footmen and Racers, as to lay aside every weight of Sin, Guilt and Corruption, yea the very Motions, Inclinations and Liableness to Sin. For these last also are some weights, which do hinder and retard the moving of our Souls and their making towards God. They are as some clippings of her wings, and entanglements, and pressings down, as she would fly and lift up her self towards Heaven; the Habitation of the *Father of Spirits*. The Footmen and Racers will sometimes strain so hard for to obtain the Prize and win the Wager, especially when they come near to the end of the Race that is set before them, that they will break or burst a Vein, till they spit Blood or it gushes forth. All this carries Instruction and Exhortation, that we should do as much and the same for to obtain *an Incorruptible Crown, which they do to obtain a Corruptible Crown, even to resist unto Blood, striving against Sin.* Which is to part even with our Hearts Blood, which is the very best and choicest of all, for it is the Vital Blood wherein our Life consists; and so willingly and by choice, suffer every drop of Blood in our Body to be lost or shed, as did the Captain of our Salvation (who herein left us an Example, that we should follow his steps) rather then we will commit, yield or consent unto Sin. This is worthy and noble indeed, *not to love our Lives unto Death*, but Sacrifice up our Life even to God that gave it, when it is in his service, and to maintain and keep our own Integrity, Uprightness and Innocency; to preserve not so much our Honour and Reputation (as that will follow also; for the Righteous shall be had in everlasting Remembrance)

grace) as our Conversation blameless, without spot or blemish. Or the meaning hereof may be supposed to be to strive and fight against those Lusts which War in our Members, till we fetch Blood of them. It is commonly said, that if you fetch Blood of a Witch, she can never do you any harm. Why each and every Lust is an Imp and Instrument of the Devil, and if we can so far fetch Blood of that same Lust, as to bring out and take away the Power of that same Lust, or the thing wherein the strength of that Lust did lie; this is to pluck out the sting, so that the Lust cannot hurt us. As also when the Blood thereof is drained and drawn out, that same Lust will faint and die away.

When thou art tempted to a Lust here, if thou wouldst not be led away and enticed by that same Lust, then mind and observe well wherein that Temptation is most tempting. And then if thou wouldst resist and overcome the Temptation, do thou apply all the Grace, Strength and Knowledge that is in thee against it. If one was to fight against an Enemy, and He would only flurt on the outside of the Hair of his Head, or scare along and aside his Garments, or now and then lightly touch his little finger, it might be long enough before He would kill or destroy that Enemy. But if He would in good earnest, with all his Strength and Power, have at his Head and Heart, and to that aim and lay on the deadly weapon, then He may as soon dispatch him. Just so as to the first kind of dallying, is Peoples fighting with their Lusts. They do not conquer and subdue them, but had rather play with them, or make a shew of fighting with them. Thinking thereby to deceive God, who hath commanded them to fight with these *Amalekites* and *Canaanites* within, and destroy them utterly. But they pretend, they cannot; whereas they will not, is the true cause. As to these Lusts,
and

and sinful Desires and carnal Affections, which War or rather have Habitation in their Members; when God Commands such to fight and drive them out, but they do only sport with them, and had rather that they tarry in them, they being like a soft or pleasing *Dalilah*, Here such will not escape from what is pronounced against them, *Cursed be he that doth the Work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be He that keepeth back his Sword from Blood*, Jer. 48. 10. Thou art Childish or in Love with thy first original corrupt state (which is not having even the Garment spotted by the Flesh) if thou art afraid or unwilling by the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, to draw Blood of thy Sin or Corruption, that it may languish or die away. And this thou must do (notwithstanding all thy natural Inclinations to the contrary, for this is to deny thyself) if thou wouldst be a good Souldier of Jesus Christ. And if thou wouldst willingly partake of Triumph and Exaltation, when thy Soul is slipped and come out from this place of warfare here on Earth, and thou wouldst willingly be presented before the Lord of Hosts, the God of the Armies of *Israel* (this will never be without conquering) to receive his Acceptance, and the Congratulation of those who a little before had done the same things.

But the King of Syria commanded his thirty and two Captains, that had Rule over his Chariots, saying, fight neither with small nor great, save only with the King of Israel, 1 Kings 22. 31. Besides the advice and direction aforesaid, of not dallying or only making a shew to fight, but to strike home at the Head or Heart. This also is to be here learned and put in practice, as among the Devils there is one *Beelzebub* or Prince of the Devils; so among the Sins and Lusts, the carnal Affections and Desires within our Members. There is one commonly Predominant and Reigning, which doth ap-

ear forth above all the rest, and in this sence may be
 called *King* or *Prince* (which signifies Chief) of the
 other Sins and Lusts. It is the very Sin that doth so ea-
 sily beset us. As every one doth or may know the *Plague*
of his own Heart, so they either do or may know what
 Sin it is especially above all the rest, which they are
 most bent and inclined unto. According as the Tem-
 per and Constitution of the Body, (which is a Seed-
 plot of Sin and Corruption in the General) is, whether
 it be excess of Eating, secret Lust, Covetousness, Pride,
 Passion, or such like. Here the *Lord of Hosts* commands,
Michael and his Angels, (which hath Rule over the In-
 struments of War He makes use of) that is, his Grace,
 Word and Spirit which is within thee, to fight with
 neither small nor great, save only with the King of *Is-
 rael* ; that is, to fight not so much with the Inferiour
 Sins and Lusts, but especially and principally with the
 highest and chiefest of them, to bring him down ; for
 we often hear and read (as so it was here) that to kill
 a King or General in the Battel, this is to win the
 Field ; for thereupon all the rest are forthwith subdued
 and dispersed, as Sheep without a Shepherd, or as a
 Body without a Head. Even so here it is, to vanquish
 or kill the chief Sin or Lust, is to bring under and sub-
 due all the rest, for then they will submit and fall of
 course. For if we can once get the Mastery in one
 Point, we shall sooner do it in another, and so on to a
 third, *Till every Thought is brought into Captivity unto the*
Obedience of Christ. If we can and also do by the Grace,
 Strength and Power given us, overcome the stronger,
 much more shall we the weaker. If we do once tame
 the most head-strong and unruly Beast in us, we shall
 also quickly bring into Subjection and due Order, all
 the other wild brutish part of us. *I have pursued mine*
Enemies and overtaken them, neither did I turn again till
they were consumed. I have wounded them that they were
 not

not able to rise, they are fallen under my Feet. Then did I beat them as small as Dust before the wind, I did cast them out as the Dirt in the Street, Psalm 18. 37, 38, 39, 42. This is making through and effectual Work of it. And though we have a cunning Adversary to deal withal, the Devil and his Legions for they are many; and He will not bring them all forth at once; for it is now seen, that by our conquering one Sin or Lust by the help of our God, it is somewhat like cutting off *Hydra's Head*, another presently springs up and succeeds in the Room thereof. And so it is odds, that when Dominion is got over one Sin, even the Sin that doth so easily beset us, another Sin will succeed and easily beset us also. Here we are to do with that as we did with the first, and so on, if twenty or more should succeed one after another. For this is our business, and our whole Life was therefore given and lent us on this Earth, to be at perpetual War against Sin in all the several kinds and sorts thereof; and so to wound one kind and then another, that it shall not be able to rise. This verily is hard Work; for here to instance in *Lust* in the Time of Youth, Health and Strength, it may be wounded and mortified for a Time, but it will be apt to rise again. And so to beat them as small as Dust before the Wind, to cast them out as the Dirt in the Streets. This is sooner said then done as to all the Sins, and motions of Sins and Lusts that are in our Members. Neither is this a Work of one day or two, for we are many that have transgressed in this thing, Ezra 10. 14. It is a Work of Months and Years, yea of all our Life long; for we have many Enemies to deal withal, and it is a long Time before we can conquer one as it should be, even so to wound it, that it shall not be able to rise. The Method of God's working by his Grace in the Souls of Men in driving out the *Canaanites* from thence is, *By little and little*. By little and little, I will drive them out from before

ore thee, until thou be increased and inherit the Land, Exod. 23. 30. And so it is elsewhere written, The Lord shall increase you more and more, Psalm 115. 14. Which He doth so of his Saints and Servants till they inherit the Land, that is, enter into Heaven, which is the best Land of Inheritance.

In Exod. 23. 29. it is said, *I will not drive them out before thee in one Year, lest the Land become desolate and the Beast of the Field multiply against thee.* So it may be reasoned and supposed, that God will not fit us quite for Heaven in one Year, lest it should be said we live all the other Years here on Earth to no purpose. Lest that Ignorant Beast of the Field, Pride and Boasting, multiply in the Soul, and it become desolate of the Graces of Humility, and working out our Salvation with fear and trembling. I have read of an Heathen, who came to a Christian Man to learn a Lesson of good Instruction, and saith He, when I have learned that I will come again; and accordingly a Lesson of Instruction was given unto him, which was this, *I said that I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my Tongue,* Psalm 39. 1. it was no less then seventeen Years before He came again; for He had not thoroughly learned so as to practice this Lesson sooner. But one half of this is enough for us to learn and practice, not only in seventeen, but in seventy Years, which is all the Life of Man. The half I mean is this, *I will take heed to my ways,* this little is more then many People will observe, if they were to live to the days of Methusaleh. And if I should Preach unto ye seventy Years, I could not recommend unto ye a better and more useful Word of Instruction, than that ye would once unfeignedly resolve and do accordingly, to take heed to your ways that ye sin not, neither with your Tongue, Heart or Hand, neither in Thought, Word, or Deed, nor with any Member that ye have. Let this be the Doctrine and

and Use, the Drift and Design, the Application and Benefit of all this whole foregoing Sermon. Remember and carry this Word away with ye ; I beseech ye, *Take heed to your ways that ye sin not* : And I would to God that some of ye would come to me, or send Word to me where-ever I am, whither it be a Month, or Year, or seven Years hence, (if God in whose Hand our Breath is, should suffer us to live so long) or even in the Place of departed Souls (for they may *Remember*, Luke 16. 25. what they were in such a Place, and at such a Time put in mind of and exhorted unto by such an ones Ministry,) and then and there tell me, that you have learned throughly and practised continually that short Word of Instruction, *to take heed to your ways that ye sin not*. And then indeed if ye do so, *ye will be my Beloved, my Hope, my Joy, my Crown in the Lord*. I have no greater Pleasure, than that ye walk in the Truth. I have no greater Comfort in the World, and satisfaction of my Preaching than that (notwithstanding all those several inconveniencies and loss which attend me for it, but these I matter not) ye obey the Word which is preached and made known unto ye.

The summ of our whole Discourse, and Word of Exhortation from the foregoing Sermon, is to this Purpose and Effect. Though I am no Prophet, neither am I a Prophet's Son, as to pretend unto immediate and extraordinary Revelations from God, for to know more of his Secret than others ; for I am as one of ye (although perhaps I have had a little better Education, and I have given my self up more wholly unto spiritual things, than such as follow after Worldly Trades and Employments) yet this I gather from the sure Word of Prophecie, as also from the common Observation of things, that after all my Preaching unto ye, till my Strength fails on this Subject, or rather
until

Until no more Words do recur to my Mind concerning it; yet I foresee and foretel that several of ye (perhaps one or a very few may, I am not sure of that neither) will not lay aside every weight, and the Sin that doth so easily beset ye, and ye will not resist unto Blood, striving against Sin. Yet nevertheless the Scripture cannot be broken. That hath commanded and directed ye all, yea and my self likewise, to do so. This I teach and affirm constantly. For I gather it from out of the same Scriptures; that until all this be done thoroughly, effectually, and constantly, there will be something (even what is Essential, Principal and Necessary) wanting in our Souls, and so they will not be set in order before we die. As it is written, *The Scripture foreseeing, that God would justify the Heathen through Faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, In thee shall all Nations be blessed.* Even so in like manner the Scripture, which is very Pure and Holy, and was given to make us wise unto Salvation, which also knows what is the Will and Expectation and Decree of God (who is very Pure and Holy) hath chalked out Rules of the highest Perfections and Attainments; though withal it doth foresee that Men and Women through Ignorance, Errour, Failings, Infirmities and Temptations will not arrive up unto, but come short of them. However, there is no Salvation nor Assurance; nor yet well-grounded Hope to be had for Men and Women without a sincere and diligent endeavour, without an actual pressing forward towards the mark of the high Calling which is in Christ Jesus; even unless they follow and strive after the very highest Perfections and Attainments of Christianity; even until they do indeed lay aside every weight, and the Sin that doth so easily beset them, and run with Patience the Race that is set before them; resisting unto Blood, striving against Sin.

Sin. Which if they have not done as yet, God expects it from them ; and woe be unto them if they do it not.

As aforesaid, for this cause God doth as yet leave us breathing on this Earth (only for a very little while longer) that we should set in Order what things are wanting in our Souls. That is, we should fill and make up and supply what is yet wanting, according to what hath been afore spoken of. If we have been and are a-doing this, when the Time draws nigh that we must die and be taken off from this Earth, God will translate us up into Heaven ; because we have this Testimony, that whilst we were here, by this doing *we pleased God*. Which again is done by *Faith*.

SERMON

(76)

S E R M O N I V.

Isaiah 38. 1.

— *Set thine House in Order, for thou shalt Die, and not live.*

SO much of the Duty enjoined, *Set thine House in Order.* Now come we to the Reason annexed, *For Thou shalt die and not live.*

I have compos'd a Sermon concerning Death and Mortality, on *Hebrews*, 2. 15. which also I have caused to be Printed, and thus it now remains written for the Generations to come, *Psal.* 102. 18. This is an easie Subject to Discourse on, because here so many things lie open, common and obvious to the Knowledge of all People whatsoever. Yet here again on the other hand, it is so much the more hard to Preach thereon, inasmuch as Preaching the Word, should be in a somewhat higher strain, above the level of the usual Talk and Thoughts of common People; for it should make known such things which are not commonly known already. For it is according to the Mind and Will of God

God that Knowledge should be increased, Dan. 12. 4. So that is not barely to gratifie an itching Ear, or the *Athenian-like* temper which is in Mankind, in being desirous to hear or tell of some new thing, for besides to answer the expectation of our Hearers, it is our Duty, *And new things do I declare*, Isa. 42. 9. at least such as do newly spring up in our mind, although they be old Truths. However we are also allowed of God (having Authority for the same from his Word, and also his Apostles and Ministers for our example hereof) both to Preach the very same things which are commonly known and Preached already, as also to write and speak the same things again which we have already written and spoken, in order to stir up your pure Minds by way of Remembrance, and also to make safe and full Proof of our Ministry. And so whilst in the Course and Order of my Ministry I do partly Preach such things which I have Preached already, and also some other farther Truths from week to week according as God bringeth the same to my Knowledge, herein I do exactly answer and comply with that saying of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *Every Scribe instructed into the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a House-holder which bringeth forth out of Treasury things new and old*. My intention and design at present is only to make known what new and further Thoughts and Truths do arise in my Mind as I Treat upon these words, *Thou shalt die and not live*. Of which as we speak, it may be convenient and profitable to use this method.

1st, To handle the words simply and abstractedly, *Thou shalt die and not live*.

2dly. To shew what mighty Force, Reasoning and Exhortation is in this Consideration, *Thou shalt die and not live*, to the intent that we may set our House, that is,

is, all our Worldly Concerns, Body and Soul in Order, because that we shall die and not live.

These words were not spoken and intended to *Hezekiah* only, but they are also spoken and do belong unto and are for Admonition unto every Man and Woman of every Countrey, Nation and Language, and of every Generation and Time, even from *Adam* until the last Resurrection of the Dead, when they shall not Marry nor be given in Marriage, and Men and Women shall be Born and Created no more. It is hence demonstratively evident that it doth belong to all, because the reason thereof doth sensibly and evidently belong to all, *Thou shalt die and not live*, For if any Man or Woman is exempted or priviledged from Death and from being liable unto it, then indeed these words do concern *Hezekiah* who afterwards died, but not him or her. But it being most certain (for nothing is so sure as Death) that all must die, therefore of necessity these words of *Isa. 38. 11.* are a Command and Instruction, they are for the Learning and Admonition of every one of us *upon whom the ends of the World are come*. And as Jesus Christ spake to his Disciples and Followers, *What I say unto ye, I say unto all, watch*. From whence it doth appear that that word of his did appertain to the whole Multitude that followed him as unto the Twelve; from hence it will appear also, that what the Lord, the Creator and Preserver of all Mankind, said unto *Hezekiah*, it is as much and the very same, for we are to take and receive it all one, as if the Lord God should speak to every Son and Daughter of Men that were Descendants from *Adam* and *Eve* whom *He hath Created and calls them all by Names*. Set your Houses severally in Order, for ye shall die and not live.

It is as certain and unavoidable that we shall die, as that we now live. We of our selves could not possibly hinder

hinder our selves from coming forth into life and the light of the Living. For when and as soon as we were ready and ripe for the bringing forth, we struggled in the Womb, and the God of Nature ordered and provides a way for our coming forth from thence, neither is it in the Knowledge or Power of the *Embryo* or Infant to strangle or suffocate it self in the Womb, or of it self (for it is done by the Mother or some other outward accident) to pass away as the untimely Fruit of a Woman; neither hath it Strength or Understanding immediately after it is brought forth to kill or destroy it self. And as it grows up towards Manhood, there is implanted an Instinct, Self-Preservation and Abhorrence of Dissolution. From whence it appears on one hand how God our invisible Creator (who during all our Infancy doth *bind up and strengthen our Arms though too many know it not*) for it is not the Nurse or Mother, but God only who gives that care and compassion to the Nurse or Mother (in administring of help and doing of benefits God acts through the Creatures) and even he acts through them whilst they are doing of it. As he is *Excellent in Counsel* and *Wonderful in working*, even so his Works are, by *little and little*, slow and gradual, in succession of time and by degrees. And as we could not hinder our life in its first beginning; neither can we avoid the laying it down after the time appointed by our Father and Creator; for we have received it of him for such a time. Said Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Image of the invisible God, the first-born of every Creature (for so *Paul* calls him by the Spirit) who in all things hath the preheminance and who shall declare his Generation (whereby is denoted the unconceivableness thereof) *No Man taketh my life from me, I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it up again, this I have received of the Father.* And so indeed no Man can take our life from any of us (let Men threaten or

say what they will ; as I my self have been sufficiently threatened but I have not feared them upon this consideration, *While they took Counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life. But I trusted in thee, O Lord, I said thou art my God, my times are in thy hand,* Psal. 31. 13; 14, 15. so that Men cannot so much as kill the Body, unless God doth first suffer it, for without his Will a Sparrow doth not so much as fall to the ground. But none of have power of laying down our lives (unless it be in a way of Duty and the Service of God ; in which it hath been sometimes *suffered thus far*, Luke 22. 51. as to be taken away by the hands of wicked and violent Men ; Until the time that God sends for and *Requires*, Luke 12. 20. this life of ours by Sicknes, outward Accident, Old Age, or such like. But further, as to any Power received by us of taking up our Life again, here we must leave Jesus Christ : for as to that we cannot follow him nor pretend to it, none of us having received so much from the Father. And therefore the Scripture doth so distinctly express it concerning him, *Declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holiness* (whereby is shewn forth that Holiness did help and contribute towards it) *by the Resurrection from the dead*, Sometimes is said that *God raised him up, having loosed the pains of death. Because it was not possible that he should be holden by it ;* and sometimes it is so expressed, that Jesus raised himself up, *Destroy this Temple, and I will build it up in three days.* Observe by this Particle I, that he would do it by his own Person, and by his own Power ; which yet himself acknowledged to have received from the Father ; which he accordingly fulfilled in the Temple of his Body.

It is a wonderful, yea a pleasant thing to consider thoroughly, how that the invisable God our Creator, doth deal with us his Creatures, and to observe the whole Order and Method thereof, from the first be-
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ginning to the very last. And call no Man your Father upon the Earth: for one is your Father, which is in Heaven, Matth. 23. 9. Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God Created us? Mal. 2. 10. Thou, O Lord, art our Father: we are the Clay and thou the Potter, and we are all the work of thine hand, Isa. 64. 8. Hast thou not poured me out as Milk, and crudled me like Cheese? Thou hast clothed me with Skin and Flesh, and hast fenced me with Bones and Sinews, Job 10. 10. 11. And indeed without an Almighty Power (who worketh and we see him not) that Ordereth, it could never be that so Noble and Excellent a Creature should proceed from such a mean beginning. The Fathers according to the Flesh do nothing at all towards the infusion of the Soul (which is pure and only the Creation of God) and as for the viler part, the Body, they do no more towards it by the act of Generation, than the Husband-man doth to make the Corn grow, by his scattering the Grain in the Earth. They are but Instruments in the hands of God, and by the meanness of them (if the blinded World can see so much) he doth the more magnifie his own Power. He might have Created all Mankind as he did the first immediately out of the Earth in fulness of Stature, or to grow up as Trees and Vegetables. But by the same Wisdom whereby he made the Heavens, he hath ordained this only way of coming into the World.

How it is with us in the Womb from the Conception unto the day of our Birth, it is thus Written, *For thou hast possessed my Reins. Thou hast covered me in my Mothers Womb. I will Praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, marvelous are thy Works, and that my Soul knoweth right well. My Substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the Earth. Thine Eye did see my Substance yet being imperfect, and in thy Book all my Members were*

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written;

written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them, Psal. 139. 13, 14, 15, 16. How it is with us in the very same day that we are born, we may learn from what is written, *And as for thy Nativity, in the day that thou was born, thy Navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee, thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all, none Eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion unto thee, but thou wert cast out in the open Field to the loathing of thy Person in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee and saw thee polluted in thy own Blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy Blood live, yea I said when thou wast in thy Blood, live, Ezek. 16. 4, 5, 6.* Behold the goodness of God herein. And then how it is afterwards during and throughout those six Stages and Periods of life (which we are to run through before we enter into Rest) Infancy, Childhood, Youth, Manhood, Declining Years and old Age; how we grow up by little and little; and then waste and wither away by little and little. For we all do *fade as a leaf*, Isa. 64. 6. All this we see and know, we experience and feel, so that there is no need to describe it farther. But first and after all we are created and made up, as a Building or a Tent to be set up for such a time, or as a Garment which will wax old and wear away, or like a Watch or any other Motion only to continue so long and no longer, even whilst the Pulse beats, and whilst the Springs and Wheels of Life within do continue in Motion and Circulation.

I have often thought and admired within my self, how the ever-living God, (unto whom all Flesh shall come) doth summon and call for us severally through the Postern-door and Gate of Death. And when I have enquired and my Heart hath searched diligently out of the Scriptures of Truth, what will become of us when we come to die, searching what or what manner of thing it

it is to die; truly the best and most intelligible account that I can give of it is this: I find in the Scriptures, that it is always expressed by these five or six manner of words, *Dying, Deceasing, Departing, Yielding up the Ghost, Gathering to his Fathers, Falling asleep.* All which tend to one and near the same signification, and so it doth if there be any other Phrase or Form of speech to express Death by. *And it came to pass as her Soul was in departing, for she died,* Gen. 35. 8. which was spoken of *Rachel.* And so when *Elijah* was to raise the Widows dead Son, *He stretched himself upon the Child three times, and cried unto the Lord and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this Child's Soul come into him again,* 1 Kings 17. 21. In the Margent there, it is, into his inward parts. Besides these two plain and express Scriptures which do prove and confirm the matter in hand, to this give all the Prophets and Scripture witnesses, That *Death is nothing else but a going out or departure of the Soul from the Body.* When the Soul, or Ghost or Spirit is yielded up and committed and returns to that God who gave it. And when the Holy Ghost Parapheth it by falling asleep, thereby it would set forth that little pain or difficulty which is therein. For they die in like manner, and make no more of it than when we take our ordinary rest by sleep in our Beds. This is commonly the Portion and distinguishing Character of the Godly and Righteous, that they go out of this Body with Peace of Conscience and Peace towards God; in which sense that saying of the Disciples is true, *Lord, if he sleepeth he shall do well.*

Which will be so as to the future State, if it be real Sleep and perfect Peace, and not the Slumberings only of false Presumption. But then as in Sleep we do not speak or act, as when we are awake, nor yet do we think clearly (for Dreaming is but a kind of confused Imagination) inasmuch as Death also doth take away the use

of those faculties, which in sleep are only suspended for a time, therefore because that in this respect and for this reason it hath some resemblance and likeness to sleep, the Spirit of God doth sometimes so compare and call it. In Death the Soul is actually gone out of the Body, but in sleep it seemeth only to lie a little more still. Again, the Body is as the House or Tenement, but the Soul is the Inhabitant or Tenant thereof; and as when that leaves it there is nothing seen but bare Walls, and not any thing that hath life within. So the Body is evidently seen to be but a meer Trunk, Carcase or Lump of Clay, when the Soul which is the life and did give it Beauty and ruddy colour (which also doth vanish with it) is gone out and departed from it.

Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace, according to thy Word, Luke 2. 29. This one Scripture shews forth and confirms all those two or three Truths afore-spoken of. The blessedness and desirableness of departing in Peace, that is, Peace towards God. Hereby again Death is shewn to be and is properly called a *departure*. According to thy Word. Hereby is shewn forth and gathered, that the Soul is only Tenant at Will to the Great Landlord of Heaven and Earth, when she inhabits here in one of his little Houses or Cottages, viz. the Body here on Earth. And it is as much as if God should say to her at first, Soul, I allow thee to inhabit such an exact time in that little Tenement of Clay; and when that time is expired, thou must come out of it again.

But now *The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him,* Psal. 25. 14. It sometimes happens that the Godly and Righteous do perceive and guess about the time God will have them to live here on this Earth. It was revealed by the Holy Ghost to *Simeon*, that he should not see Death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And
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so besides the example of *Jacob*, *Moses* and *Aaron*, and others Registred in the Book of the Lord, I have read and heard of several of the Saints and Servants of God, who have had it revealed unto them a considerable time before in their foregoing life, near about what time and at what year of life they should die, which hath accordingly so came to pass. I my self have had a forebode for several years past that I should die about the three and thirtieth, or the three and thirtieth year and an half of my life. God knows whether it will be so) *And when the time draws nigh that Israel* (and so they that are of *Israel*) must die, they do with a willing mind resign and offer up their Soul unto God as in a readiness a little before that time comes. Which is a thing pleasing and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, the God of the Spirits of all Flesh; as we see by the example and good temper of this *Simeon*, who was Just and Devout, waiting for the Consolation of *Israel*. And so we should wait beforehand for the Consolation which God will give unto his Servants, if we do indeed serve him, after that we are passed through this Vale of Tears and World of Misery.

It was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see Death. It is very proper and pertinent to the matter in hand, to open and explain this manner of Speech, of *seeing Death*. The Infidel, Ungodly, Ignorant or Brutish Person may at first look upon it as a nonsensical and false kind of saying, to see Death. For Death closes and destroys the Eye sight that it can see nothing at all. But to answer him, Thou Fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die. Thou Ignorant Person, I do here say and affirm, then it is that we see most of all when Death hath destroyed all our Opticks and power of seeing, and our Eyes are sunk into our Head. I will prove and demonstrate it from this very Similitude of Things. Do not we see more

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when we have the full and whole sight of a thing, than when we look at or upon it only through a Crevice, Hole or Chink? Do not they see more who are at full liberty in the open Air and clear Sun-shine, than they who only peep or look through the Grate or little Window of a dark Prison? Yes they do in both instances. Even so the Soul when she was in the Prison of the Body (bring my Soul out of Prison, *Psal.* 142. 7. saith the *Psalmist*) it only then looks through two little holes under the Eye-lids. But when this Soul is brought out of Prison, as it is by Death and Dissolution of the Body, when the Chains and Fetters of Flesh are knocked off, then the Soul is sight all over and throughout, and nothing at all hinders her sight as from the place of her Habitation. At present it looks through the two Windows or Casements of the Body, like the *Mother of Sifera looking out at a window*, *Judges* 5. 28. for as when we look through a Perspective-Glass, the Perspective-Glass of it self is blind and sees nothing at all: Even so the Eye sees nothing at all but only the Soul sees through the Eye. Again, when the Perspective-Glass is spoiled, we can see nothing through it: Even so when the Optick Nerves are out of order, the Soul doth not see outward things through it, but is like a light shut up in a dark Lanthorn. From whence that fleshly part of us called the Eye, may be properly stiled the Perspective-Glass of the Soul.

But at best here in the Body, it only looks through a hole or two; and then it sees only the surface and outside of things. But after it is gone from the Body, it is all light and all light, and then it will see through and into each Object. Now we see through a Glass darkly. For so is at present all the material and visible Creation of God in comparison to the immaterial and invisible Creation. For as it is written *Upon all the Glory shall be a defence*, *Isa.* 4. 5. In the Margent it is a covering.

covering. The Holy Ghost here alludes, that where things are very Fine, Beautiful, Comely, Costly, Clean, here it is usual to put something over them for a Defence or Covering, to preserve the Glory thereof from sullyng, as the custom is at this day to do over very fine Clothes, Beds, Tapistry Hangings, rich Velvet Chairs, or suchlike. So I have several times thought and I do really believe (for so much may be gathered from the Scriptures of Truth) that we shall indeed see and find it so, that all this outward visible Creation (though indeed it doth seem very Beautiful and Glorious) is but as a *Defence or Covering* cast over the much yet greater Glory of the inward, invisible, immaterial Creation of God. And furthermore, all the Glory of this present Creation is to be done away, to usher in and make room for the yet much greater Glory of the future Creation of God. And then it shall be truly returned and said, *Even that which was made Glorious* (as so is the present visible Creation. We may in the Spring time observe the exceeding Beauty of Blossoms and Flowers. Why, Solomon in all his Glory was not arraved like one of these) *had no Glory in this by reason of the Glory that excelleth. For if that which was done away is Glorious (as indeed it was) much more that which remaineth is Glorious,* 2 Cor. 3. 10, 11. *For behold I create new Heavens and new Earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind,* Isa. 65. 17. For these new Heavens and new Earth shall be so exceedingly more Glorious, that the present Heavens and the present Earth have no Glory (he would tell a falsehood that should say so, for they are indeed Glorious) in this respect by reason of the Glory that excelleth. And so as much as future Glory doth exceed present Glory: so even now the inward Glory (*The King's Daughter is all Glorious within*) doth exceed outward Glory. Nothing but such an inward thing as the Soul can see, discern

cern or apprehend what inward Glory is. Which again, she cannot so much see, know and apprehend whilst she is in the Body as she will when she is out of the Body, then she will see Face to Face. And inasmuch as seeing Face to Face is more than seeing through a Glass darkly, by certain and necessary consequence, the Soul will see more in her separated state in the invisible World, than now she doth whilst she is in the Body here on Earth. So that marvel no more at what was aforesaid, we shall see much more when these Eyes of ours are sunk into our Heads, than ever we did, when we had even the best and clearest use of them. I will open my Mouth in a Parable, I will utter dark sayings of old; one whereof hath been here explained. We shall see much, yea infinitely more when dead, than ever we did whilst living. Yea, and we shall see Death it self.

What kind of sight is this? Now we commonly behold Death Painted or Pictured upon the Walls of Churches, or upon the side of Tomb-stones, like a Skeleton of dry Bones, with a Glass and Spade in his Hand. Whereby we living are taught and instructed, that the Glass of our Time is always running; and that the Sexton will dig a Grave for us as he hath done for others. But away with these Pictures (for as they have been properly called ignorant and unlearned Mens Books, so if People abide in them and go no further, they are likely to remain ignorant and unlearned still; not knowing of things thoroughly, as they ought and may be known) for they do teach and instruct, but only in half and in the outside of a thing. That Picture or Representation of Death aforementioned, doth only shew and set forth the Alterations, Changes, and what will befall the Body; which is only the Shell or Husk of the Man. But to see such a Picture, or to conceive thereof in our mind and go no further,

further, is not a feeling Death, as it was appointed that old *Simeon* should see it. For to see the thing it self when it approaches nigh, and is actually come, is no more than only this, as if you should see one go out of an House to another Place, or as we see and feel our selves, when we are upon going and moving from one place to another. Even so Death is no more than a going or moving from out of this World into another World; or rather in more Propriety and Truth of Expression, into another room of the same House. For it is not another World, but another part of this World; the Earth being but the least, even not so much as the ten thousandth part of the Creation of God. We can better understand, than we can see what I am now going to speak of. For when the Breath of Man goeth forth in his Death, 'tis not so visible as smoke that ascendeth up. Nay, as long as it sends forth Breath, it lives. It rather seems to sink into, and perish in the Body, as may be perceived after those struggles and endeavours to fetch Breath, or to Breathe forth. Hereby is shewn forth the wonderful Workmanship and contrivance of God; that the Soul, like the Godhead himself, is purely an invisible Being. We are to admire and say, it is wonderful; and to believe, and be most fully satisfied that it is so, although we cannot comprehend it. *And the Angel did wonderfully, and Manoah and his Wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went towards Heaven from off the Altar, then the Angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the Altar, Judg. 13. 19, 20.* Even so here it may be reasoned and supposed (for it is a wonderful thing of God and his *doing wonderfully*) the thing is most true, that when we stand by the Bed-side of our dying acquaintance, we see nothing but a little struggling, gasping or such like. And yet it comes to pass, that as the Creature lies upon his back or side, his Soul goes up towards Heaven,

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it returning to the God that gave it. And as the Angel ascended in the flame, even so the Soul expires and goes out in the Breath, and we see it not. But the deceasing Soul, or rather after it is a deceased Soul, sees it; and this is a *seeing Death*. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof (but thou dost not see it) and canst not tell, whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.* So it may be truly reasoned and conceived of the Soul or Spirit. The Soul did actuate the Body, whilst it was therein; and we did Hear, See, Taste, hear and feel the Operations and Life thereof; but we cannot tell exactly the particular Place from whence it came (from God and Heaven in the General) neither can we tell the particular Place where it goes, only in the General, that it is to return to God, and to appear before him in Judgment, and from thence to go away into Everlasting Punishment, or into Life Eternal, *Mat. 25. 46.* But further, as to the exact Place, Manner, Time, we cannot tell so as to describe it particularly as it is. Again, *As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the Bones do grow in the womb of her that is with Child, even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all, Eccles. 11. 5.* We know not which way the Spirit came into the Infant whilst it was in the Womb, by Creation and Infusion from God in the General; neither do we know which way it takes, as now we know Roads or Paths. When the Breath of Man goes forth, and he returns to his Earth, his Spirit or Soul ascends up above the Clouds into the upper Parts of the World, as may be understood from the Light and ascending Nature thereof, as the same is in Smoke or Fire. We may also perceive somewhat thereof, whilst she is in the Body by liftings up of Spirit.

As *Ecclesiastes* saith, *Thou knowest not the Way of the Spirit, nor yet the Works of God who maketh all.* Even so

so it is not to be expected, that I should so make it known, even from the Law and the Testimony, and from the Light that is given me from thence, and so describe what it is to see Death, as People will find when they come severally to see and feel Death indeed. Then they shall more clearly perceive the Truth of what hath been afore written, when they shall in their individual Persons be brought down to the People of old Time. It is well, if in our Searching and Learning thereof, we come somewhat near to the Truth. By what hath been afore said, a clear Apprehension, Notion or Knowledge may be had what Death is or what it is to dye; even for the Soul to go away or out of the Body. And because, it must after Death go to Judgment, and from thence it shall go further into Everlasting Punishment, or into Life Eternal: Hence doth arise that doubt and fear of Soul, which of these places it shall go away into. As to this, how to obtain the one and avoid the other, to partake of the Blessing and escape the Curse, to enter into Heaven and not fall into Hell; to go away into Happiness and pass by Misery; all Scripture is therefore given us of God for to Teach, Instruct, and Guide us herein, even to make us wise unto Salvation. The same and this only is or ought to be the end of all Books or Sermons. I am sure, it is the only intent of the present Treatise.

According to the Method and Favour which God afforded unto old *Simeon*, we gather hence, that it is a very great Blessing and distinguishing Mercy of God; for he doth not vouchsafe this favour unto all but only to his Elect, neither doth he deal so with every sort of People, to have this revealed and manifested unto them, that they shall not see Death before they see the Lord's Christ. It is reported of *Julius Caesar* that a little before he was Murdered in the Senate-House, that he did
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see the Apparition of himself in the form of a dead Man; at which sight (although he was a Mighty Man of Valour) he was strangely astonished and struck with fear. For so terrible was this sight of Death unto him, that he did exceedingly fear and quake. And truly well he might; for he was an Heathen and Infidel, and we can apprehend by the Gospel Revelation what will become of such after Death. But our good old *Simeon* by having seen the Lord's Christ before, was sufficiently fore-armed and fortified against the sight of Death. The reason whereof stands on this wise; for as when the Chick sees the Kite or Hawk that would devour it; if she can then run under the Hens wings into the Cub, she is safe, for as the Hen was instrumental at first to give it Life and Being, so she will preserve it. Even so it is here, by seeing the Lord's Christ, who is appositely called the *Prince of Life*, Acts 3. 15. The faithful Soul, or the Soul that is Christ's, runs and makes to Christ who promises and will perform it also, *I will gather my Children together even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings*, Mat. 23. 37. *He shall cover thee with his Feathers and under his wings thou shalt trust, his Truth shall be thy Shield and Buckler*, Psal. 91. 3. Then let Death and the Devil come to destroy that Soul if they can. Here Christ is greater in Power and Might, forasmuch then as the Children are partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself took part of the same; that through Death he might destroy him that had the power of Death, that is the Devil. And deliver them who through fear of Death were all their life-time subject to Bondage, Heb. 2. 14, 15. *Simeon* was one example to confirm this Truth; for he being by the Lord Christ delivered from the fear thereof, was not so astonished thereat as *Cesar* was, or as other natural ungodly People now-a-days are. Who though they name of Christ, yet they have no Benefit or Interest in him, they being
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not within the Covenant, and they have no Share nor Lot in this matter.

Even after Death hath destroyed the Body, Christ will destroy that. Now to destroy the Destroyer, that is Salvation indeed. Which again will be effected after it hath seized and done its worst and utmost upon us. I will Ransom them from the power of the Grave; whereby it may be understood that the Prince of Life will as it were force and command it so; for God is greater in Power and Might. *I will Ransom them from Death.* As he first brought us into Life (for it was the Word of God that Created us; and the Word of God is Christ and Christ is the Word of God) and made us liable unto Dying and Death, so he will rescue and bring us up from it again. *O Death I will be thy Plagues; O Grave I will be thy Destruction.* Death hath been heretofore a Plague unto us, and the Grave hath destroyed and crumbled our Body into dust, when before it was safe and entire Flesh and Blood. But God and Christ will in this sence *Repent himself for his Servants*; and he will Plague this Plague and Destroy this Destroyer. So that it shall be returned upon him and said, *O thou Enemy, Destructions are come to a perpetual end*, Psal. 9. 6. That is, when the very same things, which seem to be destroyed and come to nothing, are raised up into Life and Being again, never more to turn into Corruption, nor yet to be subject unto Destruction. All this stands ratified and confirmed with this kind of Speech, *Repentance shall be hid from mine Eyes*, Hos. 13. 14. whereby is shewn forth the Immutability and steadfastness of God's Council and Determination herein. For it is as much as if God should say, I am resolved upon it, I will never Repent nor alter from this my Decree and Purpose.

And when all these things shall so be, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, *Death is swallowed up in Victory*, 1 Cor. 15. 24. which very words

are

are quoted out of *Isa. 25. 8. He will swallow up Death in Victory; and the Lord God shall wipe away all Tears from all Faces, for the Lord hath spoken it.* Then also those words of *Isa. 38. 1.* will be changed, reversed, read, rung, or rather they will be sung backwards. For instead of, *Thou shalt die and not live,* then it will be returned and said to the unspeakable rejoycing and exultation of us Creatures, *Thou shalt live and not die.* After *Hezekiah* had heard those words from *Isaiah*, *Thou shalt die and not live,* he turned his Face to the wall and wept sore. But it was just now quoted from another place of *Isaiah*, the Lord God shall wipe away all Tears from off all Faces: So that the same God who did see *Hezekiah's Tears*, *Isa. 38. 5.* will wipe them away in a particular, eminent, and visible manner; and so of all his Saints and Servants.

By the way, it is much better and greater Honour to have ones Name Registered and Recorded in the Book of the Lord, or the Book of Life, than to be Chronicled, or to be had in the greatest Esteem by the World.

I do the more willingly make known and rehearse these things unto ye, both because they do flow from that Fountain or Well of Truth which lies in our Text; as also to beget in ye lovely apprehensions of God. Truly, he is a good God whom we serve. And this is the best Argument and Persuasion with Ingenious and Grateful Minds to serve him yet more and more. To serve him yet more earnestly, and continually, yea and instantly. If ye hope and expect to receive those future good things from the hands of God furthermore, then we beseech you Brethren and exhort you by the Lord Jesus that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and please God, so you would abound in it more and more, *1 Thes. 4. 1. Truly, God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean Heart, Psal. 73. 1.* He is good to all Mankind indifferently and in the general; but the mixt Mul-

titude

titude do not altogether so much discern his goodness. For if they did, they would never carry themselves so Evil, Rebellious, and Despising towards him as now they do. But in an especial manner God is good to such as are of a clean Heart or clean of Heart. And here reciprocally again, those who are of a clean Heart do behold and know the Goodness of God more than the common sort of People do. For whereas on the other worse side, one sin retained and dwelling in a Man, is the Root that beareth Gall and Wormwood, and is the cause of all that Alienation from and Enmity towards God (none being Enemies to him but through their own wicked works.) So again, on the other hand, this cleanness of heart, is like the pulling or rubbing of filth, filth or scales from our Eyes, in order to help our Eye-sight; or in order that we may see clearly. For as aforesaid, every like loves its like. *An Holy God loves and accepts of an Holy Soul*: So here again it is, there being a proportionableness and suitableness herein, a clean Heart knows this proposition better than others, God is good. A clean Heart sees farther than another kind of Heart; for it can see God through the Cloud. It can see the goodness of God not only in the Land of the Living, but also when it walks through the Valley of the shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil (why so?) for thou art with me, *Psal.* 23. 4. A clean Heart doth see a good God, yea and a sweet God even through the darkness and bitterness of Death.

I have read it as a saying of those whom they call the Wittier sort of Atheists, that People in the general are afraid of Death, as Children are afraid to walk in the dark for fear to meet Hobgoblins; which we Men know there is no such thing; and from thence they would ground their Imaginations or Dictates of Unbelief. But in their Answers there remaineth falshood, and miserable Comforters are they all. For

as sure as we now live and fear several things in the World, there is somewhat real also to be feared after Death ; for as there are other parts of the World besides this Earth, as Rivers, Seas, and we may look up and behold the Stars in their Courses : So in like manner it may be evidenced and demonstrated, that there is an immortal Spirit in Man as well as a dying Body. But so far I will make use of that saying of theirs, That to the Children of God, to the Heirs of Life and Immortality, although they are partakers of Flesh and Blood, and 'tis this only which Death can hurt, yet to the main and in the utmost, Death is but as a Hobgoblin, Phantasm or Apparition. There is little reality in it ; for it is not properly a thing or Being as the Logicians and *Metaphysicians* say : But only a Dissolution of a Thing and a Privation of a Being. And that is only as to the Body ; which is as the breaking of a Shell towards the hatching or bringing forth of a Chickening ; or as a Woman when she is in Travel hath Pain and Anguish, till the bringing forth of her Child, But after that is born she remembers no more the Pain or Anguish for joy that a Child is born into the World. Even so through the Pain and Languishing of Death the Soul is born and comes forth into the invisible World, and she remembers no more the Pangs and Throws and Anguish she felt by the Body dropping from her, as she came through the Gate of Death, and now she is in an Happy and Blessed State. But this is only the favour God bears unto his own People and the *Heritage of the Servants of the Lord*, *No Weapon that is formed against them shall prosper*, Isa. 54. 17. For though the Devil thought to make an end of them and destroy them utterly by Sin and Death ; yet they are escaped whole and safe through them both. It is only to such who have this Blessing and Mark of Favour from God as to see the Lord's Christ before they see Death. It is these that *depart in Peace*.

The People of that Generation did see Christ in the days of his Flesh. We of this present Generation may see Christ in his Grace and Revelation, which is full of Mercy, Goodness and Truth. *Simeon* took up the Child Jesus in his Arms and Blessed God; Even so we may go yet nearer and farther, and take up Christ and receive him into our Hearts. This is seeing the Lord's Christ in our days, when we see him within us with the Eyes of Faith, or with the Eyes of our Understanding being enlightened. When *what we have heard, we have seen with our eyes, we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the Word of Life, for the Life was manifest and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew it to you Eternal Life, which was manifest unto us, or rather within us.* And so *Paul* saith by the Spirit unto those to whom he writes, *Little Children of whom I travail in birth until Christ be formed in ye.* The same is the end of all our Preaching, to beget Christ formed in you, which is a work of time and by degrees. And if this be done, ye will never see Death Eternal. Though ye will for all see the first Death; for *Moses* is dead and the Prophets are dead; yet ye will never be hurt by the second Death.

H

SERMON

S E R M O N V

Isaiah 38. 1.

—Set thine House in Order, for thou shalt Die, and not live.

TO see the Lord's Christ before we see Death, is to be a Partaker of the Divine Nature, to have the Christian or Christ-like Nature formed and fashioned within us. And that not in part or in some things only, but in the whole and throughout. And the very God of Peace Sanctifie you wholly; and I pray God your whole Spirit and Soul be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. This word, *wholly* and *whole* being repeated twice here in the same verse, doth shew that the Holy Ghost doth lay exceeding much stress and necessity thereon. As the Soul doth actuate the whole Body, even so Christ should actuate the Soul throughout and wholly. But here is the fault and failure of the generality of People, of those who call themselves Christians, whether they be of the straiter Sect of the Christian Religion, whatever it be, or whatever they are called.

for they would pretend unto others and seem to themselves to be more Holy, Real, and Sincere in their Christian Profession and the Service of God than others. I profess truly I do not love to name the distinguishing Names, for I would that the time were once come, as it is drawing on in these latter days, *When the Lord shall be one and his Name one*; and then all those Nick-names of the several Sorts and Sects of Christianity will be laid aside and be used no more in our Tongue. But it hath been my Observation a long time and I seldom knew it fail that when I have came near and beheld the Lives and Manner of Conversation of the Dissenters, who seem to be more Religious than ordinary, who talk so much of Christ, I find that they are for taking up Christ in some, yea perhaps in most, but not in all things. And whereas he that *keeps Christ's Sayings, shall never see Death*, John 8. 51. Yet they do not keep and obey that last Commandment which Christ Jesus is Recorded to have given, as consequently comprehensive and of greatest concernment of all the rest, *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he hath commanded us*, Matth. 28. 20. But contrariwise several of them do break some or more of these least Commandments and teach Men so, Matth. 5. 19. Do not some break or rather neglect those his lesser Commandments concerning Baptism and the Lord's Supper; which he commanded to do in Remembrance of him. These are lesser Commandments (which are only the positive outward Duties or Ordinances of Religion) in comparison to the greater things of the Law which concern intrinseck Good or Evil, Right or Wrong. Again, doth another sort observe strictly the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment, Justice, and Mercy? For it hath been observed of those who are called Rigid Strict Presbyterians; that they have been given unto Oppression, Injurious

Dealing, all for their own ends, *an Heart they have exercised with covetous practices, cursed Children*, 2. Pet. 2. 14. And they have been noted to be Stubborn, Perverse, Blood-thirsty and Cruel. Which is as contrary to Mercy one of the weightier matters of the Law, as Darkness is to Light. And so that together with their Pervereness is as diametrically opposite to Long-Suffering, the Gentleness and Meekness of Christ, as any thing in the World can be. Now if you charge any of them closely and talk with them of these things, they have a parcel of Sayings and Excuses (as indeed all Sin and Transgression hath its excuse: There being nothing so bad in the World, but somewhat may be said for it) Distinctions and Traditions of their own whereby they would make the Commandments of God of none effect. So it is evident, they break one of his least Commandments and teach Men so. Which Disobedience and Prevarication of theirs shews that Christ the Wisdom of the Father, who knew was in Man, had not supposed against a vain and unlikely thing, such as would never happen; for these do contrary and different unto it every day. But what is the consequence or harm of breaking of one of the least of those his Commandments and teaching Men so? He shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven, which there signifies the Ministration or Profession of the Gospel. This Gospel being to prepare us for and get us admission into Heaven. And by what follows in the next verse, *Except your Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. From hence there is real grounds of fear; for it may be truly understood and gathered, that such who break one of the least Commandments of Christ and teach Men so, shall not only be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven, but they shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; because

because that the Righteousness of this kind of People doth not exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees; inasmuch as these also do exactly the very same, as the Scribes and Pharisees did, *viz.* break some of the Commandments of God and teach Men so. Only with this somewhat better diversity, for the Pharisees did Tythe Anise, Mint and Cummin, but neglected the weightier matters of the Law, Mercy, Judgment, Faith and the Love of God; these ought they to have done, and not to leave the other undone. But several of the better sort of those called Christians, may perhaps observe the weightier matters of the Law, and neglect some of the lesser Commandments; whereas indeed and in truth from the like Reasoning of Christ it may be understood, that these ought to be done and observed also as well as the others.

I take God to Record this day (who is greater than our Hearts and knoweth all things) that all along throughout my Preaching and Writing, in all my Books and Sermons (as himself will witness herein for me at the last day of Judgment) I have taught and affirmed constantly, and so I do again repeat and confirm it this day, That all the Commandments of God and of Christ ought to be obeyed and observed; and not one, nay not the least of them ought in any wise to be broken. Far be it from me to teach Men so, nor yet to intimate or allow, or give the least way unto it. See *Mark* 7. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. Though for this very things sake, because I have declared and testified the Will and Commandment of God to be on that wise, as he saith by his Prophet, I will be a swift Witness against false Swearers, and against them that turn aside the Stranger from his Right, *Mal.* 3. 8. For this cause my Books and Ministry hath been rejected by the Corrupt and Ignorant Multitude of this World. As it is written, *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy,*

let him be filthy still, Rev. 22. 11. So if they go on still in their refusal to hear or receive that part of God's Word which is committed to my Ministration, and in their other Stubbornness and Reproaches (for *their Lips have spoken lies, their Tongue hath muttered Perverseness*, Isa. 59. 13.) I shall sooner convince them out of the Law, take it in the whole together and not by piece-meal only, to be Sinners and Transgressors herein, then they can convince me of *having dealt falsely in God's Covenant, neither have we dealt falsely in thy Covenant, neither have our steps declined from thy way*, Psal. 44. 17.

The very nature of a Covenant stands on this wise, to observe all the several sorts thereof. Suppose we enter into a Bond to perform Covenants; and there are for instance six Covenants mentioned in an Indenture: If one of them is broken and not performed, and the Bond is put in suit thereupon, it will be in no wise a good Plea in Law, for the Covenanter to say and alledge that he hath observed the other five. And so when God comes to enter into Judgment and to call People to an Account; when he shall call to the Heavens above and to the Earth that he may judge his People. *Gather my Saints together unto me, those that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice*, Psal. 5. 6. How they have kept his Ten Commandments from their Youth up, or all the days and years they were on this Earth, for so far his Judgment will examine and reach back, as his foregoing Statutes, Laws and Judgments did enjoin, *Deut. 12. 1. Luke 1. 74, 75*. Then God will not accept of it as sufficient, if some should say, Lord, I have kept nine of them, others eight, others six, others perhaps obeyed none at all from the Heart. And so it is of all the other Commandments of God which are written any where else in the Bible, whether of the Old or New Testament, they ought to be observed all one, it being God's Statute Book, whereby he governs over

the Nations of the Earth, all one as the Acts of Parliament of this Nation are kept and done accordingly. Now as when one is Arraign'd for Murder, Felony, or any other Capital Crime, it will not avail and save him if he should plead and say for himself, that he had obeyed and kept all the Laws of *England* besides. The same holds true as to the present Account and future Judgment of God. For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, do not commit *Adultery*, said also, do not Kill; now if thou commit no *Adultery*, yet if thou Kill, thou art become a Transgressor against the Law. So he that said, do not worship Idols nor graven Images, said also, do not swear vainly or falsely. He said also, do not Covet and do no Wrong. So that if a Man swears vainly or falsely, or if he Covets and doth Wrong, although he doth not worship Idols, nor graven Images, he is become a Transgressor of the Law. So it may be reasoned concerning the keeping of some and neglecting or transgressing of others, run them changeably throughout all the Ten Commandments. The Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, especially in the eight and ninth Chapters, Reasons very much from the nature of Covenants and Testaments. Which as himself Paraphraseth it, serveth unto the example and shadow of Heavenly things, and it is elsewhere expressly said as pertaining to this, *That though it be another Man's Covenant, yet no Man addeth nor diminisheth from it.* Even so it is as to God's Covenant unto Man. If we would indeed have the Benefit and precious Promises belonging to the Covenant, we must not in the performing and fulfilling the same on our parts, we are to add nothing to it, nor yet should we diminish or take any thing from it. The Covenant of God is the Word and Law of God (for so it is called in sundry places of Scripture) and the Word and Law of God is God himself and Christ himself.

so that herein the saying is true, Take all, or take none. *Is Christ divided?* 1 Cor. 3, 13. Or can God be divided? It is impossible as to both. Ye cannot serve God and *Mammon*. Although many foolish deceived People and outward Worshippers, who serve divers Lusts and Pleasures, would vainly imagine and think to divide their service one half for God and another half for the World or their own Lusts. But herein they do greatly err; for if they would have the Lord to be their God, he will be the Lord their God in all things, or otherwise he will not accept of such for Servants. And if People would willingly, really, and unfeignedly have Christ formed within them, they must have Christ formed within them throughout or not at all. There was a little Type and Signification of this in what is written, *Now the Coat of Jesus was without Seam, woven from the top throughout*, John 19. 23.

The end of all our Preaching is to get Christ formed within you, for that is a seeing the Lord's Christ before we see Death, and then we shall neither fear Death, nor yet can Death possibly hurt us. But it was needful thus to explain it, that Christ must be formed within us throughout and not in part only. For otherwise it may be a shew and representation of Christ within, but it is not Christ indeed no more than an unshapen lump of Flesh is a real Child, or no more than a Leg or an Arm is the whole Man, or than any part is the whole. The Works of God are always perfect and compleat at the last; although at first they may be only in beginning, growth and increase. And so it may be in the Creation of the New, Spiritual, Divine and Christ-like Nature, as is the forming and making of the Bodily part of us. Where in truth at the very first of all the Substance is imperfect, and all the Members in continuance are fashioned when as yet there was none of them; as appears by the Progression of an *Embryo* to a real

real Infant or Child. And as the Carpenter or Carver now taketh any common piece of Wood and stretcheth out the Rule, he marketh it out with a line, he fitteth it unto the Planes, and he worketh it out with a Compass, and maketh it after the Figure of a Man, according to the Beauty of a Man that it may remain in his House, *Isa. 41. 13.* The Spirit of God doth describe it on this wise; and so the same God our Creator our Strength and our Redeemer; *For thou also hast wrought all our Works in us, Isa. 26. 12.* Or as it is in the Margent there *for us.* He takes near upon the same Method and Order in the Souls of Men, in forming and fashioning them fit for himself. Provided always, That we be Workers together therewith, and so we receive not the Grace of God in vain; that whilst God is a working all our works in us or for us, we be sure our selves also to work together with him and under him. So as to comply with and forward those good Motions and Thoughts he puts and infuses into our Souls from time to time, so as to obey and do according to them. For upon our doing or not doing of this doth depend and turn the Salvation or Destruction of Men. If we would thus give up our selves wholly and thoroughly and continually to follow the Guidings and Leadings of our God, he would at length so order and effect the matter until every Thought in us should be brought into Captivity unto the Obedience of Christ. By what words of Truth one single Thought is brought into Captivity, another is also, by the same or like words of Truth which God doth infuse or lay before the Soul. And so it would go on and successively till every Thought is brought into Captivity unto the Obedience of Christ. Mark here how it is said, every Thought, and not some Thoughts only. For less than this God will not accept of, and until this be done in him or her

no Man or Woman can be certain of their own Salvation or make their Calling and Election sure.

From hence we may see by the way how vastly different from and above are God's Thoughts over Mens Thoughts. For according to the Judgment and Estimate of the World they are good Christians and good People, who are good only in some things and now and then do a few good deeds. But let the same People talk what they will in Slanders and Reproaches and false Sayings, let them speak Vanity every one unto his Neighbour, or with flattering Lips or a double Heart, there is no great notice taken of this. Do we not this very day see with our Eyes and hear with our Ears, that the Strain and Course of the World goes on near at this rate? And then farther as to Thoughts, here the Heart of every Man is deep. It is Universally imagined that Thoughts are free, and let them have but a fair outside Religious Conversation, (for the Multitude and Generations of People have been outward Worshipers of God all along) they shall pass well enough in the esteem of the World. Although in their Heart they work wickedness and their *Thoughts are Thoughts of Inquiry*, Isa. 59. 7. which is thinking things that are not equal. But in opposition and contradistinction to all this God is not as Man but above Man. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts neither your ways my ways saith the Lord: for as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* His Word at present (much more will his future Judgment and Retribution for this is grounded upon the other) takes notice and cognizance of every Thought, 2 Cor. 10. 5. And if this Word of God be continually Preached and made known to the Heart and Conscience it will not let it rest and be at quiet until every Thought is brought into Captivity unto the Obedience of Christ. His Word which
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is a Discerner of the Thoughts and^e Intents of the Heart, doth more mind what is within than what is without the Man. *O Jerusalem wash thine Heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be clean, how long shall thy vain Thoughts lodge within thee?* Jer. 4. 14. Hence it appears that it is not sufficient barely to stop the hand or cease from the outward act of wickedness, but the Heart is to be washed from it before we can be saved. Again, how very few among the called Christians do make a Conscience of vain Thoughts? Or to whom vain Thoughts are a grief and a burden, so as to crush and not give way unto them when they are so? But they abstain from them as much as ever they can. And they do not only say so with a parcel of customary words for there is a fashionable kind of Religious talk, when they do not feel the same inwardly, but they do not sensibly find it so in them. And then they are meer complainers only, *O my leanness!* *O the Vanity and Corruption of my Heart!* Or such like, but they stand still and do not mend, nor endeavour to get rid of those vain Thoughts.

As God understandeth our Thoughts afar off, and hath appointed his Word as a Rule and Regulator thereof, so there is not a word in my Tongue, but lo, Lord thou knowest it altogether. Here also the Law of God is perfect, converting the Soul, Psal. 19. 7. And as it reaches to the very bottom, so it extends unto and gives its several Orders and Rules for the Government of and Fashioning and Framing aright all his Thoughts, Words and Actions. As indeed it would be useful to shew it particularly. *If any Man among you seemeth to be Religious and bridlth not his Tongue, but deceiveth his own Heart, that Man's Religion is vain.* And so if People use a multitude of words in which there wanteth not sin; if their Lips speak lyes and their Tongue muttereth perve seness; If they utter Error against the Lord.

Lord or lying words, Isa. 32. 7. And so it is of Reproaches, Slanders, Back-bitings and Whisperings; if they do not make a Conscience to refrain from every idle and vain (and much more from every false) word; For of every idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of Judgment: In a word, unless they do take heed to their ways that they offend not with their Tongue, Alas! How very few do all this even among the Professors and Religious also? Let them make what pretences, appearances and shew they will by going constantly to the Exercises and Ordinances of Religion, and by observing all the Acts, Times and Seasons of outward Worship, both in the Congregation, Family, Closet or Chamber, yet all their Religion is vain.

Truly, there is more that goes to the making up of Good, Perfect, and thorough Christian, than we do at first think and are aware of; and so to constitute the Pure and Undeiled, the Sincere, Real, Inward and Universal Religion. Which last Epithet, Universal, is fitly added as comprehensive of all the rest; as also to distinguish and know it from the Partial Religion of the Multitude; for theirs is a Religion in some things and not in all things. There is a great deal more requisite to be indeed a meet Partaker of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, than is to make one only a Member of the Visible Church here on Earth; for to that is required no more than their coming to the place of Worship and bringing their Bodies with them. And People will find (I do hereby warn and testifie that they do not discern it then only when it is too late and when the door is shut) that there is more to be done, and that it is an harder and longer work to get admission and entrance into Heaven, than barely to go to Church or to such a Congregation every Sabbath, nay though it should be every week day throughout their life; or then to
say

say their accustomary Prayers which too many count it dull, tedious and wearisome enough. For most true it is, that at the day of Judgment it will be seen of many, who shall not then only at that moment, cry, Lord, Lord, but they also did say, Lord, throughout all their foregoing life in an accustomary manner of outward Worship and Prayer; to whom God shall Answer, *I never knew ye, Depart from me ye that work Iniquity*, Matth. 7. 21. 23. Now the working iniquity signifies the doing those things which are not Equal. And so it will be, depart from me ye that have lived in the continued Breach of any of my least Commandments.

Even at that day of general and final Judgment (notwithstanding the present heart-burnings, and self-justifyings of the Religious) *The Lord will shew who are his, and who is Holy, and will cause him to come near unto him, even whom he hath chosen, he will cause to come near unto him*, Numb. 16. 5. I do really believe and am verily perswaded, for I gather as much from the Scriptures and particularly from that saying of Christ, *That which is highly esteemed amongst Men, is abomination in the sight of God*, Luke 16. 15. That many People will be damned, and go to Hell; who are now accounted and have the Character of very Religious, Civil and Honest People, Fair Conditioned and Good Neighbours. As again, several will be saved whom the World doth revile and cast out their Name as Evil, in like manner as their Fore-fathers did to the Prophets, Impoverish and Oppress, yea it may be, Imprison and put them to Death. As it was said of Paul, *Away with this turbulent fellow, it is not fit he should live*. But how must such be ashamed to see those very same Souls had in Honour and Rewarded by the Infinite and Glorious God, whom they made and used as the filth and off-scouring of the World, had in Derision and a Proverb of Reproach, and

and esteemed as the contemptible ones of the Earth. The Scene will change, and there will then appear another face of things.

I do the more willingly here put in mind of these things for two Reasons.

1st. That you may know what to answer when your Opinion is asked concerning such an one, of whom perhaps the Multitude is divided, and some say, *He is a good Man, and others say he deceiveth the People.* Some say of him that he is a Rogue, Hypocrite or deceived in his Religion. Others are apt to think that he is Sincere, Understanding and Consciencious in his Religion. And so when you hear a more favourable Report of another sort, that they are Good Religious People, because they always go to Church or Meeting, and they do several good Deeds. Here it is well for them if their Goodness and Religion is Universal. They will not be ashamed, neither in this World nor yet in the World to come, *If they have respect unto all God's Statutes,* Psal. 119. 6. But in both these and so in like cases, we ought to think as near as we can according to the Law and the Testimoy and according to the Light that is in them, but let alone all pronouncing of Judgment; for all Judgment is the Lord's. We are to suspend our Verdict and Judge nothing before the time. For the day cometh when the Lord will manifest the Counsels of the Heart, and then shall every one have Praise of God.

2dly. I do the more willingly put in mind of these things, to quicken, stir up, and provoke all that shall hear or read these Lines, to give all diligence, to use their utmost Earnestness, Strength, Labour and Endeavour, and that not only for a fit or spurt. But continually throughout all their remaining Life, and to be

be sorry that they had begun to do so no sooner, to arise up and be saved. For truly, there is more absolutely necessary unto it then People are aware of. It is observable, what follows immediately after, *Luke 16, 15. The Law and the Prophets were until John, since that Time the Kingdom of Heaven is preached and every Man presseth into it.* So it is at this very day and hath been all along, the Kingdom of God is preached, and the Word of God is preached for to bring People to that his Kingdom, or to bring People to Heaven. And if you ask every Man or Woman, that ever heard a Sermon in their Life as there is hardly any one in this Nation, who hath not heard a Sermon, unless some ignorant Papists, who are next door to Atheists. Whither they do Hope to go to Heaven? Every one will say that they do. But the Scripture here saith, *Every Man presseth into it.* To explain the very sense and meaning of that Word, it will be necessary to use this instance and similitude, suppose that we did see or word was brought unto us, that all such an House, wherein was a great Assembly of People were on Fire, what running and scampering would there be to the doors? And each one would press upon another, who could get out first. The Parallel place in *Mat. 11. 12.* especially the Marginal Reading thereof, confirms this very same Acceptation and Signification of the Word, for there it is on this wise, *And from the Days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.* In the Margent there it is, gotten by force, and they that thrust Men. Which last is as much as to say, that People are for all by Nature sluggish, so that they would not run and press enough of themselves in such a Case of Necessity and Danger. But we Ministers and Preachers of the Word must also thrust them on. For so it is, the door of the Kingdom of Heaven stands, and is held open by the

the Preaching and Ministry of the Word. But in as much as the Fathers, where are they? and do the Prophets live for ever? Both Preachers and Hearers must dye the Death. So that the door is not always open to them. And as to this again, the rule is certain that if any one doth not in this Life (which is the time of Probation and Trial on this account) do things worthy to stand before the Son of Man, or to which Heaven is promised, unless *He doth the Commandments of God, that He may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the Gates into the City*; unless People bring forth fruits meet for Repentance, and so except People do things meet for Heaven before they die, they will never go to Heaven after that they die.

As to that important Question, What we must do to be saved, or; how much we must do to be saved? Or to get into Heaven? In these two foregoing Texts it is said, The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth Violence, and the violent take it by force. Every Man presseth into it. Strive to enter into the straight Gate, *Luke 13. 24.* It hath been observed by the learned in that Language, that the Word, strive, in the Original Greek, doth require to put forth the utmost Strength, even until we break a Vein and the Blood gusheth forth (which none of the Lazy Formalists, meer outward Worshipers and nominal Christians can pretend unto) and so again we read, *That the Righteous shall scarcely be saved.* And indeed throughout the Scriptures, and the Gospel especially, there are scattered up and down, so many true sayings of God concerning the exceeding difficulty, danger and fear of disappointment herein, that they who have enquired and searched diligently therein of the very Terms and Conditions of this Salvation, do truly make this return upon their whole search and enquiry of this matter, *Thus the Kingdom of God is a Pearl of great Price, which*

if a Man would buy and obtain, he must sell all that he hath and give for it. Who knows this better than our Saviour Jesus Christ, who is the Author of this Salvation; and understands upon what Terms it is to be had. So we must sell all that we have, all Sin, Evil, and Wickedness, which is properly our own: We must part with all the Guilt and Corruption, that is in our Nature, all that savours of Sin, or of our selves; and so all that savours of the World or of the Devil is to be renounced utterly, and we are to dispossess our selves thereof; in order to have that Pearl of great Price. For less than this cannot be to make room for Christ to be formed in us. Forasmuch as he will not dwell with any Evil, or with a Body that is leavened or tainted with Sin. Now if People will not bid up to the Price, which the Lord hath put upon it, they must go away without it; they have neither Part nor Lot in this matter; for their Heart is not right and whole in the sight of God.

Behold I have told you before, and I do hereby warn People of as much before hand, against the Time they shall see it fulfilled and found true in the valley of Desolation, that all People will not go to Heaven, who now seek to go to Heaven. For many now-a-days talk of Heaven who will never go there. For there will be rejected at the last day, those who have Prophesied in Christ's Name, and in his Name have cast out Devils; and in his Name have done many wonderful Works. One may Preach throughout all his Life unto others; and be a cast-a-way for all that. For it is equally possible for a Preacher or Minister, for a Priest or Clergy-Man to be damned, as for any other Person. I am to look to this, and to take heed to my self, least the Devil deceive me also (O the exceeding subtilty of the old Serpent) even whilst I am laying down Rules out of the Scriptures of Truth, to prevent his deceiving of others. See ye well to it, therefore all that shall

hear or read this, that now the Kingdom and Word of God is a Preaching unto you, that every one of ye do press in thereat ; and now in these days the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth Violence, and the violent take it by force ; *Looking diligently, lest any Man fail of the Grace of God, lest there be any Fornicator or Profane Person as Esau* (and so it is applicable in like manner, if there be any Sinner in any kind) *who for one Morsel of Meat sold his Birthright ; for ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the Blessing he was rejected ; for he found no place for Repentance though he sought it carefully with Tears.* And so when your Souls are shut under Hatches by Death, then if ye would labour for Heaven, and strive for Heaven, and ye would then do the Will of God, yet ye would be rejected, and not accepted. Ye will find no place for Repentance, no room for seeking, nor yet striving to enter in at the strait Gate, though ye should seek it carefully with Tears. Ye may cry out and howl to all Eternity, Lord, Lord, open to us when the door is shut ; for ye should have pressed, and strove, and run (yea we Ministers of the Gospel, do push and thrust ye on dull Beasts, as ye are, with the Prick and Goad of the Word, which is committed to our Ministration) to enter in thereat, whilst the door was open.

I have read of one, who was converted and brought over to a most Holy, Precise and Religious kind of Life, by the Dream of a Night Vision or by a Voice speaking unto him in his Sleep ; that such an Acquaintance of his (naming him by his Name) was really damned. Now he that had this Vision was an outward Worshipper, Religious at the common Rate, Standard or Measure as it goes ordinarily in the World with the Generality and Multitude. But the other Person whilst he lived was more religious and strict, than People usually are. And if such an one should be really damned

ed for his defects, and comings short in matters of universal and inward Religion, how should this quicken and exhort others and my self, as yet living, to the utmost preciseness and circumspect walking in all things: For if I may so express it, a little preciseness and circumspect walking in all things is much better, and beyond the utmost and greatest preciseness and circumspect walking only in some things, as the manner of too many is who seem to be Religious. But if such an one whom the World accounted very Religious, should perish, Good God! What will become of us, who are not Religious, perhaps to the tenth degree, as he was? This should indeed stir us up so to run, that we may obtain (as we do desire it, and foolish are they who do not endeavour all that they can after it) to be in all things what God commandeth us, very circumspect and to abound in all Holy Conversation and Godliness, as is possible for Mortal Creatures, whilst in the Flesh and in this Life to be.

For truly, if we consider throughly the great displeasure God Almighty hath to Sin, as is set forth in 2 *Pet.* 2. 4, 5, 6. He spared not the Angels that sinned. And how, that for one single Act of Disobedience, he entailed a Curse on *Adam* and all his Posterity. Of six hundred thousand of his own People, whom he had brought out of the Land of *Egypt*, there were but two only which went into the promised Land; and *Moses* himself, who before had so often stood in the gap between an enraged God and a provoking People; yet He was not admitted into the promised Land of *Canaan*, because he had provoked his Spirit and spoke unadvisedly with his Lips; hereupon misgiving and fearful thoughts have arose in my Mind, that if *Moses* such a precious Servant of God; unto whom there arose not a Prophet since in *Israel* like unto *Moses*, whom the Lord knew face to face, *Deut.* 34. 10. yet

if this very Man so familiar with, and beloved of God was not admitted to enter into the promised Land, for but one unadvised Speech of his Lips, much more may I a sinful Creature, and so may others also, tremble and fear, that after I have done all to get into Heaven, which is the promised Land, yet I may not be admitted there; for really my self have, and it is well if ye have not also done many more and worse things, than to let fall one unadvised Speech of our Lips.

I have been guilty of an Omission of Duty (which as I sensibly perceived at the very time did shut Heaven against me, although at the very same time I went to Worship the Lord in the Congregation, when at the very same time He commanded and directed me to give forth Testimonies of his Law and Truth unto the Rulers and chief of the People, who were then met together in another Congregation for outward Worship. But through my neglect and failure herein, I had smittings of Conscience, and Revelations of his Wrath against me in that manner as here spoken of. Have a care of Sins of Omission; for 'tis these which shut Heaven against us, as may be seen from the latter end of the twenty-fifth Chapter of *Matthew*.

Truly, after all the things we have done in order to God throughout all this our Life; after all our Prayers and hearing the Word preached; after all our Acts of Publick, Family, and Private Worship, and whatever we have done pertaining to Religion, or what is commonly called good Works, yet it is possible and to be feared, that we may perish and miscarry for all throughout Eternity.

Where the Psalmist Prays by the Spirit, *Remember all thy Offerings, and accept thy burnt Sacrifice. Selah. The Lord fulfil all thy Petitions*, Psalm 20. 3, 5. Thereby is shewn forth and made known unto us, that if the Lord should not remember, nor accept, nor fulfil as

we are to strive earnestly with him in Prayer on this behalf; and so it is of whatever we have done as pertaining to God and Religion, it will not stand in stead, nor avail to the saving of the Soul. What shall we do then? the safest way and rule is, that as Christ our Saviour saith, after ye have done all things that are commanded, say, that we are unprofitable Servants. We have done only what was our Duty to do. So in the Name of God, let us do all things whatever we can, instantly, continually and diligently (remember all these three Adverbs) for to find Acceptance with our God and to get to Heaven, and to say after we have done all this, we deserve to be rejected by him, and to be cast into Hell. My Life for yours, I will venture my immortal Soul upon this Point. It shall never go one Jot the worse with us for thus speaking. For after that the disobedient and Prodigal Child had said, *Father I have sinned against Heaven, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son, yet the Father said unto his Servants, bring forth the best Rebe and put it on him, and put a Ring on his Hand (to distinguish him from, and to put him into a Condition above hired Servants) and Shoes on his Feet.* It is no absurdity and contradiction in things pertaining to God (though it may seem as a Paradox and strange Doctrine to the Proud, Self-justifying and Ignorant Pharisee) to acknowledge and confess (for so doth the Church in *Isa. 64. 6.*) that our Works are not meet for God's Acceptance, and yet God will accept of them washed over with the Blood and covered with the Righteousness of his Son.

It is a great matter and very desirable, but withal it is somewhat difficult to hit upon (because that so many miss thereof, *Who seek to enter in and shall not be able, Luke 13. 24.*) for to please and find Acceptance with Almighty God. For we are not to think now, as we shall see and know at last, that either the much speak-

ing of the *Heathen*, nor yet the Superstition of the *Jew*, nor yet the Mumbling of the *Papist* over his Beads (although all these do therein seek to please God) will receive any thing from the Lord, as to future Good and Salvation. God looks and hath more respect unto the quality than the quantity of our Services, how good they are, and not so much to the length and number of Words. And so it is of all meer formal Prayers, Lip-labour, when the Heart is far from God, with all the outside Acts of Worship and Religion, if the inward parts thereof are not joyned with them. *Let them put away their Whoredom, and the Carcases of their Kings far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever, Ezek. 43. 9.* Lip-labour in Prayer is properly *Whoredom*; for it takes away the Heart from God who is the right beloved, and places it upon another wrong beloved. And so meer and only outside Worship may be truly called the *Carcases* of Worship, that is, without any Soul, Life or Spirit therein: Now as we here learn and read, all this must be put away for God to dwell in us, and accept of our Worship. Our Matters must be Good and Right, exactly according to the great Rule of Righteousness in Scripture, if ever they will find the least Acceptance or Approbation from God. For He is an Holy God, He is a God of Knowledge, and by him Actions are weighed. And so our Worship is to be in Spirit and in Truth; for the Father seeketh such to Worship him. But all the Worship besides in the World, whether Worship in Tongue or in Body, which is all as nothing, and profits as nothing without the Heart and Spirit going along with it; or any Worship in which there is a mixture of Errour, Idolatry or Superstition is an Abomination unto the Lord, and obtains no good from him, but rather brings Wrath and Punishment on the deluded Worshipper. One false Expression

pression in a Prayer, Sermon or Service, spoils the whole Burnt-offering or Sacrifice, as to him that offers it up, I mean as to the Preacher or Minister, but the Hearers may *separate the Precious from the Vile*, and not assent unto, but dissent from it, if any falshood should drop out of his Mouth.

The same holds alike and equally true as to good Works. As to which the *Lord seeth not as Man seeth*; for *Man looketh on the outward Appearance, but the Lord looketh on the Heart*. Suppose we instance in the Duty or good Work of Almsgiving; whereof many good things are spoken, and as to which many precious Promises are made in Scripture. Now here it often so happens, that an High-way-Man, or one who hath abundance of Goods unjustly gotten, or a Prodigal Spenthrist do now and then by chance, or by way of vain Humour, inconsiderately give a Crown or a Pound to a Poor Body; when perhaps a real Servant of God, or a good Christian doth not give more than a Penny, because of his impoverishment and low Estate. The greatest sum doth the most good to the poor Object, because it is a means to furnish him with more necessities; whereas the last is the better Work, and more acceptable in the sight of God, who seeth the Heart and with what Mind it is. As the latter is done, only out of a sense of Duty and in Obedience to his Commandments; but the former sort is done at random or by chance. Or perhaps because even in the most Ungodly and Wicked, seeing that they must unavoidably die and meet with God, and every one doth more or less fear some Wrath and Punishment from him for their former Sins and evil Deeds. So they have some inward wishes and wouldings also to be at Peace with God; but they suffer it no more to grow further unto Salvation, then an addle Egg is to a live Chicken. And so such may give Alms, and that plentifully

usfully too, like him in *Micah*, thousands of Rams and
 and ten thousand Rivers of Oyl for the Sin of his Soul,
 as hoping thereby to make Attonement for it, or Com-
 mutation, or hereby to make some Recompence and
 Restitution for Goods unjustly gotten. What mani-
 fold and vain Imaginations do lurk and lye hid in the
 Heart of Man? And yet all this is besides the Mark,
 for it is not right in the sight of God. How fain
 would they be at Peace with him, and yet they are not
 at Peace with him? because they do not go the right
 way, ner do things throughly and wholly, but only by
 halves and in Part. Nor do they receive Instructions
 from the Word of God, where they might see how
 they ought to walk to please him. I have seen it quo-
 ted out of the *Turkish* History, that the Great Empe-
 rour once took some goods wrongfully from the Mer-
 chants, and being troubled in Conscience for the same
 upon his Death bed, He sends for the *Mufti* who is
 their High-Priest and tell him the Case, and consults
 with him about building Alms-Houses for the Poor
 with the same Money. The *Mufti* rather advises (and
 it was done so accordingly) to restore and give it
 back again to the right owner, or to their Children
 and Kindred. Now here, it may be thought, had not
 the poor Reason to curse the *Mufti*; for had not they
 more need thereof than the Merchants who are com-
 monly Rich, and could better bear the loss. No, for
 all that in this the *Mufti* shewed himself a good Man.
 For whether the Alcoran doth so direct or not, I know
 not; but I am sure that herein He did speak and di-
 ctate according to the Law of God in the Bible. If a
 Soul Sin and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie
 unto his Neighbour, in that which was delivered unto him
 to keep or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by Violence
 (this was the Turkish Emperours Case as to the Mer-
 chant) or deceiveth his Neighbour, then it shall be be-
 cause

*cause He hath sinned and is guilty, that He shall restore that which He violently took away, or the thing which He hath deceitfully gotten, Lev. 6. 23. Or if the Party be dead, then to his Kinsmen, or if there is no Kinsman, then let the trespass be recompenced to the Lord, even to the Priest, Numb. 5. 8, 9, and so on. If neither the Parties themselves, nor their Children nor Kindred were alive, for to whom Restitution was to be made, then Alms was to be done in the very last place of all. From whence it appears, that as Mercy is before Sacrifice, so Justice and Restitution is more pleasing and acceptable in the sight of the Lord then Almsgiving; for assuredly, He who hath commanded, *Thou shalt not bring the hire of a Whore, or the price of a Dog into the House of the Lord thy God for any Vow: For even both these are an abomination unto the Lord thy God, Deut. 23. 18.* even He will not accept of Alms out of Goods, or an Estate unjustly gotten or holden. For I the Lord love Judgement, I hate Robbery for Burnt-offering, *Isa. 61. 8.* And so God hates Robbery for Almsgiving. *Will you speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him, Job 13. 7.* And so will you lie, or rob, or steal, or oppress, or grasp too much because it is in the Power of your Hand, and practice, and devise iniquity, *Micah 2. 1.* and pretend it is all for God, which is Abomination and Hypocrisie. And so it holds in like Cases, for where is the same Reason, and approves it self so to the Hearts and Consciences of such as are unconcerned, and not partakers of the wrong, here is the same Law. For as God hath made the Hearts of the Inhabitants of the Earth alike, *Psalms 33. 14.* So their Consciences are near alike, until they become byassed and dipt in the same Sin and Guilt. *He that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much, Luke 16. 10.* So it may be truly reasoned, what is unjust in a less Matter, is unjust also in a greater Matter. And whereas it is further,*

ther on, *If ye have not been faithful in that which is another Mans, who shall give you that which is your own?* ver. 12. from this same similitude of words it may be again truly reasoned, that he which gives Alms of Goods unjustly gotten, he gives away another Man's and not his own. And so he that takes or grasps more of lands or goods than of Right or Equity do belong to him, he also gives that which is not his own but another Man's: Do not your Hearts, and Consciences assent that these things are so. And so when the Lord cometh to judge the World with Righteousness and the People with his Truth, Psal. 96. 13. and the People with Equity, Psal. 98. 9. He will lay open many such like things as these from out of the whole Scriptures of Truth, and applicable to all the doings of the Children of Men considered whether in Nations, Families or single Persons.

Whatever mistakes in matters of Religion Men frame now unto themselves, or whatever wrong imaginations they take up and receive into their Minds by which they are acted and do act, for the Heart of every one of them is deep, yet in all this Man may be and is deceived, but God cannot be deceived. The Lord will recompence to each one according to his Righteousness and according to the cleanness of his hands in his eye-sight. (By the way, it is one thing to have ones hands clean in the sight of Man, and another to be clean in the sight of God.) *With the Upright Man thou wilt shew thy self Upright* (now Uprightness signifies standing bolt upright, without inclining or leaning, or stooping or bending any way) *with the Pure thou wilt shew thy self Pure, and with the Froward thou wilt shew the self Froward*, Psal. 18. 24, 26.

As Cicero the Eloquent Orator did say, *Nihil tam absurdum est quod non dixerit aliquis Philosophorum*, holds true as to the Multitude of the called Religious and outward Worshippers. *There is nothing so absurd but what some*
seem

seeming Religious People have imagined or spoken, or what some outward Worshippers or others have not practised. So strangely and miserably hath Satan deceived and befooled poor Mankind both in the general and also in their several individual Persons. Whereas Religion as it lies in the Book of the Lord, especially the great things of the Law of God and the things to be done by us, is the most reasonable and conceivable thing in the World. But if we look upon it as it is in the Lives and Manners of Men, it is altogether as perplex and we do not know what to make of it. To hear all their several Notions and Sayings concerning it, to see their Divisions (*for the Divisions of Reuben there was great thought and searching of heart*) to behold and observe how one is for this thing, another for that; some are for one part of the Word of God, and others for another; but few do care to take it whole as it lies all together. And then farther to conceive of and see that infinite multitude and changes; for it is rather so than any great variety of all the several Thoughts, Words and Actions of all the numerous Inhabitants of the Earth, which differ from one another as their several Faces, though it be all made of the same Lump and Clay; What shall we say as to all? Why we are here in the Wilderness and under the Cloud. We are in a Confusion, Perplexity and in the dark until we come into the Sanctuary and see the end of those Men. Until we get out from the Multitude and go into our Chamber and are still, and take up the Book of the Lord and read and that will set us right again. *Which will teach us in thy way, O Lord and lead us in a plain Path, Psal. 27. 11. Thy Word is Lamp unto my Feet, and a Light unto my Path, Psal. 119. 103. and will be a sure Guide through this Earth towards Heaven.*

As the Prophet *Micah* saith, *For all People will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever, Micah 4. 6.*

So I have several times thought within my self, as I have beheld and observed People, some going to the Church, some to such and such Meeting-Houses, called by their several distinguished names, some to the Mass-House, others to the Jewish Synagogue. And so if you conceive and in mind go over beyond the Seas, and run throughout the several Sects and Sorts in Christendom. And then there are divers sorts amongst the *Mahometans, Jews, Profelites, Gentiles, Greeks, Abyssines*, and of all Countries of the habitable parts of the Earth. I have read that in some places they Worship *Devils* or *Demons*. All these vast medly of Religions doth confirm the truth of this short Word of the Prophet, All People will walk every one in the name of his God. For who Worship the Devil, they make the Devil their God. But will all these Worshippers be saved? No. Will then some few of all these sorts be saved? It is hard to affirm that also. For certainly, they that Worship *Devils* or *Demons*, will not be saved. And inasmuch as all they *are cursed and will be confounded who Worship Graven Images, Stocks, Sticks, or Stones, And Idolaters shall not Inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9. but shall have their part *in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone*, Rev. 21. 8. So that Idolatrous Worshippers, who are knowing or who may be knowing, and who continue therein, shall not be saved. It doth not belong to any Mortal Creature to determine who shall be saved or who shall be damned: But yet in our Preaching and Ministry we may make use of the Scripture words which say of one and of the other, *He that believeth and is Baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned*, Mark 16. 20. All Judgment is the Lord's: For he is Judge himself, and he shall make a right Decision among his People. *And before him shall be gathered all Nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats.*

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They seem to run too hastily, and to stick too much in the words of the outward Letter, who at once damn all the Heathen World from that one saying of *Peter*; *Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other name under Heaven given among Men whereby we must be saved.* For such an one as *Socrates* who died a real Martyr for the One God in opposition to that Error of Polutheism so common among the Gentiles, may be saved by the name of Christ at the last day. *And so such of the Gentiles which have not the Law, but do by Nature the things contained in the Law,* Rom. 2. 14. although they were before or since Christ, or in other Countries, there is good ground of Hope from the Mercy, Goodness and Truth of God, for they are his Creatures as well as we, that some of these will be actually saved by the name of Jesus Christ also *whom as soon as they shall hear of, they shall obey him,* Psal. 18. 44. In the day when God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ according to the Gospel. For indeed those *Gentiles* or *Mahometans* did obey Jesus Christ all along, although they never heard of his outward Name, when they did by Nature the things contained in the Law, they having not seen any written Revelation. But this I do Teach and Affirm constantly, That inasmuch as Christ is become the *Author of Eternal Salvation to all that obey him.* And to them only, For God hath Anointed him to be a Prince and a Saviour; to be a Prince to give Laws for us Subjects to obey, as well as to save us from our sins, by yielding and complying with him we do also obey him. And inasmuch as the same Jesus Christ hath said, *If thou wilt enter into Life keep the Commandments,* Matth. 19. 17. from hence it appears, that of all the Sorts and Sects of Christianity, such of them and they only will be saved, who confirm all the words of his Law (which includes both the Law of God and the Law of Christ, both the Old and New Testament) to do them, *Deut. 27. 26.* For

as every one is cursed that doth not confirm all the words of the Law to do them. And as the Prophet *David* saith, *They are cursed that err from his Commandments.* And so unless they confirm that particular Commandment of Christ to do it, Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have Commanded you, *Matth.* 28. 20. they will never be saved by Christ. And so if they should break one of his least Commandments and teach Men so, they will not be saved by Christ. But whosoever shall do even to the very least and to every one of them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. And this is to have Christ formed within them, and not in part but throughout, and both Body and Soul and Spirit may be preserved blameless unto the coming of Jesus Christ. This is to take and receive Christ in all things and not in some things only, as the manner of many is, who call themselves Christians, but they are not, but do lye; as all such do who name the name of Christ, and yet do not depart from Iniquity.

I will make so far bold with those words of Scripture, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, which was said to the Penitent Jaylor, as to affirm, That to believe with an Historical Faith that Jesus Christ was the Messiah sent by God, will not save any one. For suppose a Drunkard or an Unrighteous Man, or a Fornicator, or any of that black Catalogue which are excluded from the Kingdom of God in *Cor.* 6. 9. 10. 11. should believe all that, as none do commonly deny it, will this Historical Faith save him? In no wise. This makes against that Error and Deceit of the Solidians, and some Dissenters among us have bordered upon and came near to the same Error and Deceit. The bare name of Christ will not save any one, but it is the thing; for several name the name of Christ who have not Christ, nor yet the thing signified by him.

S E R M O N V.

Isaiah 38. 1.

—Set thine House in Order, for thou shalt Die, and not live.

IT was the saying of Abigail unto David, *Yet a Man is risen to pursue thee and to seek thy Soul, but the Soul of my Lord shall be bound in the bundle of Life with the Lord thy God,* 1 Sam. 25. 29. So the case stands as to us all. One is risen up to pursue us and seek our Souls; even our Adversary the Devil (of whom *Saul* was a kind of Type and Signification in Hunting after and Persecuting of *David*, or rather the Devil acted through *Saul* in it.) *As a roaring Lyon walketh about seeking whom he may devour.* And he hath Death and Hell for his Companions; or as two Dogs, the one to catch and the other to destroy or make miserable. But here if we see the Lord's Christ, or have Christ formed within us, he is appositely and truly stiled the *Prince of Life*. So that then of certain consequence our Souls are bound in the bundle of Life with the Lord our God.

God. This is a great expression containing in it self an unspeakable benefit. Then it is that we dying Creatures, if we have seen the Lord's Christ, or have Christ formed within us, we are bound up in the bundle of Life with the ever-living God. So that of necessity, as fire warms all things that are next unto it and which are capable of warmth, we must live also. For with thee is the *Fountain of Life, and in thy Light shall we see Light*. So it may be truly reasoned also, in thy life shall we have life. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds to meet the Lord in the Air; and so shall we be with the Lord. But when we once see the Lord's Christ, or rather feel him formed within us and we thus have our Souls bound with the Lord our God in the bundle of Life with the Lord our God, then we which are now dying and going off from the Stage of this Earth, as soon as ever we move off from thence, *The Eternal God is our Refuge and underneath are the everlasting Arms, and he shall thrust out the Enemy before thee*, Deut. 33. 27. This Enemy is the Devil, who was afore spoken of to be risen to seek our Souls. Behold how in a wonderful manner all Scripture is consonant to it self at the greatest distance of place, and how the goodness of God provides beforehand for the safety and salvation of Israel, that is his People and Servants. For he hath provided *everlasting Arms* to reach, receive and catch the Soul in just upon its flight and being let out from the Body. And whereas it is said, *That he rideth upon the Heaven in thy help; and in his Excellency upon the Sky*; so that he is above the Prince of the power of the Air, who with his Evil Spirits hath his Residence or Habitation thereabouts. But we shall also meet the Lord in the Air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord; To partake of his Life and Happiness, his Good and Blessedness. And so whilst we are thus continually dying
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on this Earth, we shall thus wait till our change shall come. The word of Instruction which doth arise from hence is, that we should endeavour to be as like God and as like Christ as ever we can in all his Communicable Attributes, and Perfections, for so far as we are partakers of his Holiness or of his Image and Likeness here, we shall be assuredly partakers of his Happiness and Blessedness hereafter.

Thou shalt die and not live. There is no need to insist much or enlarge further upon that Subject, Death is common to all, for who knows not this already? Who knows not also that we do continually from time to time haste and approach nearer and nearer unto it? As also who knows not that we are in a World of Transitory Perishing and Dying things; but Faith teaches and instructs that all this is in order to that which *shall remain*. See *Isa. 66. 22.* and is Eternal and Life for evermore. Accordingly we find and feel within our selves (although we are subject to Mortality) yet thoughts and desires after Immortality. Which same thoughts and desires can never be in vain, but there is also a real Object of Immortality, though as yet it is unseen, to whom the same do relate. There doth arise in us a faintness and anguish at the thorough consideration of the perishing nature of things; which is sensible and may be perceived. For as when it was told *Saul, To-morrow thou shalt be with me* (that is, in the state of the dead) then *Saul fell straitway all along on the Earth, and was sore afraid because of the words of Samuel, and there was no strength in him.* So it is at the thorough apprehension and knowledge of this thing of perishing, Corruption and Mortality we become as of no strength, free among the dead; and we have less strength at the thoughts before hand that Death at length will take all strength from us. Because that things by their perishing do seem to be vain, therefore doth arise
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vexation of Spirit and we could wish it were otherwise and not so. Yea, that it is not so we have assured hopes. It is usually now reckoned an enhancement of misery, when we know better and yet we cannot have and enjoy it. For if one had never known nor conceived of the worth or goodness of such a thing, the disappointment for missing thereof would not have been so vexatious. And so here it is, God having implanted in all Men whatsoever some knowledge and expectation of enduring Eternal and satisfactory things (the ungodly have a little glimpse or glimmering thereof by natural Understanding like him that was born blind who saw Men as Trees, but the Godly have a full Light and Sight thereof by Faith) now here when every thing seems to perish and pass away, and not a satisfie fully; there doth arise Anguish, Vexation and secret Thought in the Creature towards the Creator, as if we were only tantalized, that is, put near what we cannot obtain, or put in expectation of what is not at all: But it is not so with us. For only the matter is thus, God doth all things in his own order. The thing is true, though the time appointed for it is long. God doth in the life that now is and on this Earth, give us only his Perishing, Transitory and Imperfect good things. *The things that I have given them shall pass away from them,* Jer. 8. 13. Which are on this respect suitable to our condition here; for that also is Perishing, Imperfect, Transitory and passing away. But his Abiding, Eternal, Perfect and Satisfactory things. *O I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness,* Psal. 17. 15. these he hath reserved and will give unto such of the reasonable Inhabitants thereof as shall be found meet and worthy after they are gone and removed off from this Earth, in the future State, Distribution and Re-stitution of all things. For we have all things here in part and by way of taste and earnest, *But when that*
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which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

Now here on this Earth is sensibly and evidently seen *Cursing, Vexation and Rebuke in what People set their hand unto for to do, Deut. 28. 20. And the Lord gives to some a trembling heart and a failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind, ver. 67.* Neither is this only the Portion of the Children of Disobedience; but even as a precious Saint and Servant of God could say, *My Flesh and my Heart faileth, but God is the strength of my Heart and my Portion for ever.* It is sensibly seen that in Declining or Old Age, or under languishing and pining sickness *(from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me, Isa. 38. 12.)* when the *Flesh is withered like a stick*; it being shriveled away and there is little more than skin and bones; when like *Barzillai* it cannot taste what we eat or drink, nor hear any more the voice of singing Men and Women; when sense can no longer relish, but it is as it were benumbed and dead as to all Creature Comforts; when the Arm of Flesh is withered, *Cursed is he that trusteth in the Arm of Flesh*, and its poor helps fail, then also the heart doth evidently fail away with the Flesh, and the anguish of Spirit doth so break forth that the Spirit it self (which did heretofore sustain a man's infirmities) can no longer pacifie, and speak true and solid comfort, but then as when the People talked of stoning David, *because the Soul of all the People was vexed, and it is before said, That he and his People lift up their Voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep, but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God, 1 Sam. 30. 4. 5. 6.* So when all these things fail and slide away from us, in which was our Comfort and Well being as to this World; and when contrariwise the Rain descends, and the Floods come, and the Winds blow, and beat up n our House. And dangerous Diseases, Poverty the Consumption of Age and the Seeds of Mortality, like those ill-natured People to

David, do threaten to stone us: Nay, they will certainly do it at length and try to make us miserable, and utterly destroy and make an end of us, if either of them is possible; Here if we can encourage our selves in the Lord our God, or say (not with good words or Scripture Phrases only, but by way of saving and feeling Truth, *God is the strength of my Heart and my Portion for ever.* So that we may be provided against the time now when our Flesh and our Heart shall fail till they come to an utter end as to the things of this World. O then it is well with us, and happy shall it be. We know that now the manner and practice of the World is, that where one is only a Rack-renter or Tenant at Will of a good Bargain, if the Landlord is resolved to put him out at such a time, here it is his Wisdom and Business in the mean while to seek out and provide for himself another good Bargain or way of Livelihood that he may be at no loss or disappointment. This is but what is usually done every day. Why, all we Inhabitants of the Earth are Tenants at will or Rack-renters (God having let out to us Husbandmen this his Vineyard of the Earth and he sits above afar off, and out of sight, and he sends his Servants to us Husbandmen, that he might receive from the Husbandmen of the Fruit of the Vineyard, Mark 12. 1. But alas! Most of them do not make so good returns thereof as he expects) to the great Landlord of Heaven and Earth, and we must be turned out; for here we are not suffered to continue by reason of Death. Is it not then our Business and Wisdom all the mean while that we are on this Earth, that we may be received up into the Heavens above?

This leads to the second point heretofore proposed to be spoken unto, and that is to shew what mighty force, Reasoning and Exhortation is in this Consideration, Thou shalt die and not live, to the intent that we may set all our Worldly concerns, Body and Soul in Order, because that we shall die and not live. The

The whole that Man desires and would have, is Happiness and Salvation, for if there be any other good thing which he would have or doth wish for; it is all comprehended under this word, to be Happy and to be made sure of it. One defines Happiness, to be a gathering or heaping together of all good things. Now if one had all the Happiness which this World can give, all the Plenty and Variety in each thing, the Blessings of *Solomon*, Understanding in the first place, and then Riches and Honour, and length of Days, even what may seem good for the Sons of Men, and whatever his Eyes desired I kept not from them, I with-held not my Heart from any Joy, besides that it is all Vanity and Vexation of Spirit. For it doth not at the very time give the Heart and Soul a full and sincere satisfaction; for all those good things put together do not yield it at the very instant of Enjoyment. But then farther, the Spirit is vexed, that if they did fully, thoroughly and sincerely satisfy her for the time, as they do not, that she must be at length taken away from all these things. And she being an Immortal Essence, nothing but what is Immortal and Eternal also, will indeed content and satisfy her. For in her very Thought, that can be no Happiness which hath an end. For she knows that her self, though she began to be, will have no end; and therefore she craves earnestly and groans within her self, and travaileth in pain, like unto that Speech of *Rachel*, Give me Children or else I die; give me a Happiness abiding as long as my self and commensurate to me; or else I had rather die, cease to be, and return unto my first nothing. But this is impossible from the Decree of God, (who whatever he doth in this kind, he doth it for ever) and it shall therefore continue in being as long as himself is God, which is for ever and ever. As Jesus Christ, the Lover and Saviour of Souls, did once say, *My Kingdom is not of this*

this World, for then would my Servants fight for me. So the Soul may truly say. my Happiness is not of this World; for then would my Servants, my Faculties and Powers seek for it here. But the former part is evident for the two reasons afore assigned; because the utmost Happiness of this World, is neither satisfactory nor yet enduring: And the Soul would fain have that which is both. And therefore it is not worth while to give Command or Direction to my Servants, my Powers and Faculties, my Reason and Understanding, to be wholly employed in seeking after them. For indeed we should be no otherwise employed about them at all, but only in subserviency and subordination to the greater things to come.

The time would fail me to mention all those manifold Scriptures (which do most discover the Nature of things of any Book of the World. For who can better know the very Nature and Order of things, than the Word it self which made and established them) which contain this very same Reasoning and Exhortation, that the Soul is not to have her Happiness in this World, but to seek for it in God, and what he will do for her in the World to come; let us instance in two or three; for by the Mouth of two or three Witnesses shall every word be established.

The first to manifest and shew forth this same Truth, is *Heb. 13. 14.* *For here we have no continuing City, but we seek one to come.* From which words it may be truly reasoned and inferred, for here we have no continuing Happiness, but we seek one to come, And then if we consider *Nich. 2. 10.* to which this place of the *Hebrews* hath reference, *Arise ye and depart for this is not your rest.* Both these Scriptures put together confirm these two Reasons, wherefore Man's Happiness is not of this World because that in the *Hebrews* saith, it is not his Rest; for all the things of this World do not give true

truereft and full content to the Soul. Again, another parallel place to this is, *Deut. 12. 9. For ye are not yet come to the Rest and to the Inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you,* Which though it was spoken as to the Land of *Canaan* as a leſs Type and Signification of Heaven, and of that Reſt which remaineth to the People of God; yet from this ſame place it may be ſurely gathered and inferred, that it hath relation principally to that Reſt which is to be had only on the other ſide of the Grave, and that Inheritance Incorruptible, Undeſiled, that faſteth not away, reſerved in the Heavens for them which God giveth only unto his People. And we are not as yet come to that Reſt, neither ſhall we ever arrive to that *Reſt* as long as we are on this Earth. As to this the inference is Natural and Reaſonable, ſeeing that we cannot have Reſt here, let us ſeek for Reſt elſewhere. For we may ſenſibly obſerve, that our Spirits are always reſtleſs or diſſatisfied about one thing or another. *The Wicked are like the troubled Sea which cannot reſt, whoſe Waters caſt up mire and dirt,* and their reſtleſſneſs is becauſe of Sin and Guilt. The Godly alſo are reſtleſs, becauſe as *Job* ſaith, *The Wicked ceaſe not from troubling them.* And alſo we are reſtleſs becauſe People are not ſo good as they ſhould be. Becauſe as yet it doth not go ſo well with the concerns of God and his Truth, ſo as to reform and bring the corrupt World into Subjection and Obedience to him as we would have it; and becauſe through that abundant Oppoſition of Satan we cannot bring our good devices to paſs; and for ſuch-like good reaſons. As alſo becauſe we are here troubled in the Fleſh as *Paul* ſpeaketh. For indeed Carnal things will not give Reſt; and as for Spiritual things *which is indeed Life and Peace,* and would give Reſt, theſe now we have only in part and in imperfect meaſure and we apprehend them by Faith. Therefore ſeeing that we cannot have Reſt on this Earth,

the Exhortation speaks on this wise, let us seek diligently and endeavour earnestly to get to Heaven; for there we shall be sure of Rest. Concerning which dying *Jacob* spake sweetly, and he saw that Rest was good, and the Land that it was pleasant. Hereby it may be known that Rest is good and pleasant by the irksomness of its contrary, restlessness.

To this purport our Saviour Jesus Christ speaks, advises and directs, which I intend as the second great Scripture to confirm the ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~fore~~ ^{fore} said Reasoning, Observation and Truth. *And I say unto you, make unto yourselves Friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting Habitations,* Luke 16. 9 The whole eight verses immediately foregoing are worthy to be read out at length; and from that Epiphonema which is added at the summing up of and conclusion of this Parable or Rehearsal (for probably it was a real and true story) *The Children of this World are in their Generation wiser than the Children of Light*; I have often thought from these very words, that if People would do as much for Heaven, as we evidently see they do for the World, none would ever miss thereof. Or at least, such would not miss thereof who do but as much towards it, as Worldlings now usually and commonly do for the things of this World: and it is reckoned their Wisdom, Carefulness and Commendation so to do. Which indeed it is if they do not set their Heart and Affection too much upon it. And chiefly, if in their Prosecution and Acquisition thereof, they make use only of those means and things, which are lawful and right and no others. As the Heavens are bigger and higher than the Earth, which is more than ten thousand fold in both instances; again, as Eternity is longer than time, which is more in comparison than the whole computation of Man's life at Seventy years is more than the twinkling of an Eye; so much is Heaven of more worth than the Earth. And pro-

proportionably there is so much the more Reason, why People should seek after Heaven than Earth, and do more for Heaven, than any do now for the Things of this World. Besides the abundant and forcible Exhortation which flows from all this; yet this other unanswerable Argument lies against all the Ungodly and Unbelievers, Ignorant and Slothful Persons in the World, they must all unavoidably go off from this Earth; and, whither they will or refuse, be taken off utterly from the things of this Earth, and then whose will be the things which they have provided? If they answer, their Children and Executors. But then I would put them in mind further, that they have immortal Souls and returning Bodies. Souls which do live the very next moment, after that their Breath goes out of their Body; which also must be raised again, after they have been corrupted in the Dust of the Earth. And what Care and Provision is taken beforehand as to both of these? Did they whilst they had them, make to themselves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, that when they themselves failed, or against the Time when themselves should fail, these might receive them into Everlasting Habitations?

But the most Men and Women will be found not to have done so much. But rather it will be fulfilled as to the Multitude, and the much greater part of the several Generations and Countreys, what God speaks by the Prophet, *They that depart from me, shall be written in the Earth*, Jer. 17. 13. which is a sad Story, as will appear when we come to open the meaning and significancy thereof. Though perhaps several Muck-worms and Earthly-minded Men, think that it will not be ill with them if this only shall be their doom, because that they love the Earth so well, that they could be contented, and not fear to have their Names written in it.

I have read the Relation of a very Warlike and Victorious

storious King in his Time, who after many Battels and Conquests, and being very prosperous and successful therein (from this Example judge none Happy or Safe before their end, but consider the Proverb, *All is well that ends well.* And make no Judgment or Conclusion concerning Providence, until the whole train, course and upshot thereof is over.) He at length goes to make War with *Tomyris* Queen of the Eastern Countrey, and (like that great Captain *Sisera* who fell by the hands of a Woman, according to the doubtful and uncertain Events of War) He was overthrown and slain by her and her Army. And after he was killed she commanded his Head to be cut off, and to be cast into a large Vessel full of Blood for the dead Head to swim therein, with uttering this apposite saying thereon, Now *Cyrus*, satisfie thy self with Blood, which thou hast so long thirsted after. Not much unlike those sayings in Scripture, *He that taketh the Sword, shall perish with the Sword.* As their *Sword hath shed Blood, so give them Blood to drink.* But that aforementioned was a sore Proverb, and a severe taunting Expression to be used to a Dead-mans Head swimming in a Vessel of Blood. Note hence by the way, how that the Judgments and Threatnings of God are herein fulfilled, *Thou shalt become an Astonishment, a Proverb, and a By-word, and an Hissing,* Deut. 28. 37. and Jer. 24. 9. and 25. 9 for *Tomyris* spake this according to the Knowledge which God had given unto her as his Creature. In like manner, God may at the last day of Judgment, use a like kind of saying to the Men of this World, and to the Men of this Earth, in your Life-time heretofore ye did Love, Thirst after and greedily desire the Things of this Earth, and now ye shall have enough of the Earth and make your most of it; for your Names shall be written in the Earth. There seems to be no great matter in this, for where is the Hurt, Inconvenience, Pain

Pain or Loss in all this? I will soon tell ye from out of the Scriptures of Truth, as also I do hereby give warning (hear this and tremble, all ye covetous Persons, Muck-worms, and Earthly-minded Men) we read expressly in 2 Pet. 3. 10. *The Earth also and the Works that are therein shall be burnt up*; then by Consequence; all those People whose Names shall be found written in the Earth, shall be burnt up also together with the Earth, and the Works that are therein; as indeed another Scripture doth come in, and confirm and give Attestation unto the same. And *whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the Lake of Fire*. Now again it is certain, that whose Names shall be written in the Earth, they will not be found written in the Book of Life, nor in Heaven, but their Names shall be blotted out from under Heaven, and noted down with a black Coal here on this Earth. So that of Necessity, they shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, and be burnt up, (they being the Chaff of the Creation of God) *with unquenchable Fire*. As saith the Wise man, *Envy thou not the Glory of a Sinner, for thou knowest not what shall be his end*. So I now preach unto ye, do not envy the Riches, fine Estate, or Plenty of a Man of this World, or a Man of this Earth; who makes the World, and the good things of the Earth his main End and principal Business; for it appears from the Scriptures of Truth what will be their End; namely, when the Earth and the Works that are therein shall be burnt up, themselves whose Names shall be written in the Earth (Many of whom now call their Lands after their own Names, Psalm 89. 11.) shall be burnt up also together with it with unquenchable Fire. For my part, I had rather have my Name written in the Book of the Living, and be written with the Righteous, though by Persecution and Oppression I should be stripped of all, than to have my Name written in the Earth,

although I might be Lord, Proprietor and Owner of several thousand Acres of good Land. And so would ye also, if ye have a true Faith and Knowledge in the revealed Decrees and Dispensations of God, and in the Things pertaining to his Kingdom. Though withal it is to be understood, as the same may be truly gathered from out of the same Scriptures of Truth, none will be condemned at the last day meerly or only because He was Rich in this World; and so it is contrariwise, none will be saved meerly or only because He was Poor in this World. But People will be saved or condemned according as they have done Good or Evil, and according as their Deeds done in the Body were Righteous or Unrighteous, Just or Unjust, Equal or Unequal, True or False, Acts of Duty and Obedience, or Acts of Sin, or according as they do most set their Heart and Affections upon God, or the Things of this World.

I have heard a Man speaking on this Wise, *As long as my Possessions, Goods and Estate will serve my Time, it is well enough.* Which seems to be a fit Expression for one who hath his Portion in this Life. And truly this is the mistake the Men of the World go upon, for this makes them so eager and desirous in compassing and obtaining them, whether by lawful or unlawful means, whether by right or wrong, Omission of Duty or Commission of Sin. For they imagine and say, that the good things of this Life will serve for their Time. But in this they do greatly err; for as aforesaid, themselves have immortal Souls and immortal Spirits, which exist and live the very first hour after they are dislodged from the Body. And seeing that the World passeth away, and the Lust and Fashion thereof; It is hence manifest and clear, that they do not, neither will they serve their Time. For our Time, or the Time of our selves, which is our Souls, is to last as long as God himself, and to run
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parallel with the longest Line of Eternity, even until Time shall be no more, but we are thence launched forth, into the vast and infinite Ocean of forever and ever. *Tell them therefore, thus saith the Lord God, I will make this Proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a Proverb in Israel, but say unto them, the days are at hand and the Effect of every Vision,* Ezek. 12. 23. So when the Earth shall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord (which also includes the Knowledge of the Things pertaining to his Kingdom) as the Waters cover the Sea; there shall be no more used this kind of saying in the Mouths of People, that the things of the Earth, or the things of this World will serve their Time, so as to last as long as themselves shall last and endure, for the one are perishing and corruptible; but themselves, that is, their Souls are Immortal and Incorruptible.

Indeed in this Sence they might and should serve their Time, by using and receiving them to the Glory of God, and according to the Bounds, Rules, and Directions of his Law, that they might be for the Benefit and *not hurt of the owners*, as the Wise Man intimates; and according to this Counsel and Command of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Make to yourselves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into Everlasting Habitations.

Rich People should most of all much consider of this; so that themselves may be hereby influenced and persuaded for to do accordingly. For these sensibly know what a Comfort and Conveniency it is, to have an Affluence and Plenty of the good things of the Earth ready to their hand without their being forced to drudge and labour for them. They should herein Eye the Providence and Dispensation of God, as also apprehend, how that they are herein liable to higher and stricter accounts, to make unto him for more Talents
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and Priviledges received from him. But then chiefly, they should lay deeply to Heart, that though they now have such an advantage of Worldly Prosperity ; As they find the Comfort and acceptable Relish thereof, is it not then desirable to continue so ? And therefore, they should take Care and give Diligence, that against this fails (for Rich People must dye, and when *they die they can carry nothing away with them*, the forty-ninth *Psalme* is apposite and pertinent to them) to be provided of an Happiness in the highest Heavens for evermore. *Aristotle* an Heathen could say, whose saying herein will rise up in Judgment against them, Rich People have the most Reason to serve God of any, because God hath been so good and bountiful unto them. This is an Argument which the Holy Ghost makes use of in Scripture, from God's Kindness and Love, that they should keep in the way of his Commandments, and not turn aside from them. But contrariwise, is it not seen ? that *Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked* ; that the Rich and Substantial, and Chief of the People are the greatest despisers of God, because they are full and lack nothing. Do they not blaspheme that worthy Name by the which ye are called ? Do they not make a Mock and Jest, and Light of the Power of Godliness and Serious Religion ? Though themselves partly for Fashion sake, and partly for Conscience-sake may just observe the form and out-side thereof. Do we not perceive them to be ashamed of the Words of Christ, and of the Gospel in this adulterous and sinful Generation ? Yea, they are ashamed and do disdain to come into the Place where God's Word is preached in the plainness, simplicity and meanness thereof : My Brethren, these things ought not so to be. Though hereby it may be perceived, I had almost said, seen, that there is a Devil and Satan who deceiveth the whole World, and turneth even them aside (who would seem more wise and

and knowing than the common sort) from the things that belong to their Peace, or otherwise they would not as now they do, only because forsooth, *they are waxen fat, they are grown thick, they are covered with fatness*, then (Oh horrible degeneracy and ingratitude!) to forsake God which made them, and lightly esteem the Rock of their Salvation, *Deut. 32. 15.* nor yet would they lightly esteem the Word of God's Ministry, by whomsoever or wheresoever it is faithfully and truly used and held forth; the only drift and design whereof is to set forward the common Salvation of Mankind.

A third observable Scripture, which is to confirm and establish the Truth and Reasoning of our whole present Discourse, as indeed it all comes to one and the same thing, even to be provided of a well-being elsewhere; as soon and immediately after we are deprived of a Being at all as to this Life, and on this Earth. This Scripture is contained in all these three Verses put together: *Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the Son of Man in whom there is no help. His Breath goeth forth, he returneth to his Earth, in that very day his Thoughts perish. And then it immediately succeeds, Happy is He that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose Hope is in the Lord his God, Psalm 146. 3, 4, 5.* To say absolutely, that there was no help in Man would seem false and untrue; for many times Man our Fellow-Creature is helpful unto us in several instances. He that giveth an Alms is helpful and instrumental to preserve Life. But as the Spirit speaketh elsewhere, *Her Merchandize shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently, and for durable cloathing, Isa. 23. 18.* so as to help sufficiently, and proportionably to its need and for durable help, in this sence, *there is no help in Man.* For in the Case here put, when the Time comes that his Breath must go forth, can all the Men or Physicians in the World help

help or hinder it? I trow not. Can all the Kings of the Earth with all their Armies, protect any one whatever from a Mortal and inward Disease? In no sort. And then the help of Man is not durable. He may help now and then for a Time, but he cannot help always. Now seeing that we have within us an enduring substance, a Soul which may and will be happy or miserable, which will be saved or damned, after it is dislodged from the Body; here if she should cry out as the Woman of *Tekoa* did, *help O King!* or as another Woman cried unto the King of *Israel*, saying, *Help, my Lord, O King!* and He said, *if the Lord do not help, whence shall I help?* Or as it is said in the Book of *Job*, *to which of the Saints wilt thou turn thee?* And so if the Soul cry out for help to the Ministers or Saints of the Lord, neither Rulers, nor Ministers, nor Saints can afford sufficient and durable help to the saving of the Soul. See *Psalm* 47. 7, 8. They can no more save her after she is gone out of the Body, then they could preserve her from going out of the Body, when the appointed and set Time is come. Then *Happy is He that hath the God of Jacob for his help.* In him alone is our help, in him alone is our Salvation, and whose Hope is in the Lord his God, or who hath Hope well-grounded that God will save her; to whom God will prove helpful, and the Object of his Desire or Hope, and not a punishing Judge, or a Terror to us in the Day of Evil. The short of the Matter is this, and herein is the Happiness of the Mortal Creature; if at the instant, when his Breath goeth forth, his Spirit is committed into thy Hands O God, who art ever-living. And if when his Thoughts perish as to this World, his Soul is lodged in *Abrahams* Bosom the Father of the faithful, from whose Loins we descended. For assuredly the God of *Abraham*, here called the God of *Jacob* for both live unto him and are happy in him at this Day (though to
our

our thinking *Abraham* is dead, and *Jacob* is dead) will be that unto his Creatures & Souls (for all Souls are his, both by Creation and Redemption) what a Breast or Bosom is to a cold Infant, newly come out of his Mothers Womb.

The sum of all our Exhortation is to this Effect; Seeing that we must all Dye and not Live (I have had many a shrug at the lively apprehension thereof, and at the sence of the near approach thereof, both immediately after my Nights Sleep, and my Noon-days Slumber) and then we shall Live again and not Dye; it is as reasonable and natural to desire to be Happy after Death, all one as we desire to see good in these days of our Flesh, and to pass through here as comfortably and as pleasantly as we may. Is there any one that doth not desire to live comfortably and pleasantly in this World? No, every Mothers Son doth desire this: If we would receive into our Minds the Knowledge and Faith thereof, God hath implanted into every Man and Woman the same earnest desire after Heaven, as now He or She hath after Life and Happiness. For seeing that by the Decree of God, and from the very order and establishment of Things, we must live for ever (for we shall always remain in Being, although we must go through the valley and shadow of Death, or through the Postern-Door or Gate of Death) I say again, it is altogether as natural and reasonable to desire to be Happy after Death, all one as it is sensibly desired to be Happy before Death. And as in order to this, it is requisite to use such and such means: so to be Happy after Death. It is absolutely necessary to go in the way; and to do all those things which God hath chalked out and shewed in his written Word; and there is alike and greater Reason, yea ten thousand times more as that is as much longer and of greater concern, that we should comply with and do thereafter. As the hungry craves after Food; the ambitious Honour; the sensua-

list Pleasure, and every one desires Rest and Satisfaction, and they will also use the common means in their Power towards having of them : So there is a desire implanted in Man, after those good things God hath promised. And it is but reasonable, that He should do so much towards the obtaining of them, I say infinitely more, as the Children of this World do for the things of this World, or otherwise they will never be Children of Light, and Heirs of Life and Immortality. But they will come short of the future great and good things of God ; for these also are set forth by the very same things in a greater degree, than what is so earnestly followed after here. So that it is evident, where they are believed and received, they must persuade Men ; for the very same Considerations do actually persuade, and also prevail with Men as to all other things.

In a Word, the practice of universal Religion (which is the fear of God and keeping his Commandments, or rather the confirming of all the Words of his Law and Gospel by our doing of them) comes and stands enforced with such uncontrollable Arguments, that where they are received into the Mind and pondered in the Heart, they must of Necessity weigh down, incline and sway the Mind towards God, and the good things pertaining to his Kingdom. And after all, were there not a Devil and Satan, the unseen Enemy of Mankind, who yet for all deceiveth the Nations, and deceiveth the whole World : It would be, if not morally impossible, yet highly improbable, that not so much as one of the Sons or Daughters of Men should perish. Whereas now by the manifold kind of Imaginations and Excuses, which that invisible Tempter whispers and suggests to the Hearts of the Children of Disobedience, to despise God that formed them, in their despising the Ministration of his Word , and some way or other

other to turn aside from, or deceive in that Religion which is to the saving of the Soul, that after all the Preaching and Hearing which hath been in the World, the greater part of both Preachers and People will be cast-a-ways and perish for ever. Things have been and are so transacted all along, that those few Preachers which shall be saved, as also those few Hearers that shall be saved (for there is only but a fourth Part of the Hearers of the Word *Matth. 13.* and *Mark 4.* that will be saved by it. And then, what will become of the Multitude of Non-Hearers? They shall certainly perish and be destroyed without Remedy.) But the Hearers that shall be saved will stand by and assent that it was so, when the Preachers that shall be saved, shall make this or the like return at the last great Day of Judgment. *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious People, Isa. 65. 2.* or as the Words are a little varied in the Gospel, but to the same purpose and signification, *All day long have I stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and gain-saying People, Rom. 10. 21.* which will be found true not as to *Israel* only, but to the whole of Mankind, of the several Generations and Countreys.

To use the same *Hezekiah's* Phrase (who gave occasion to the Words of our Text, on which so many things have been Discoursed) *What shall I say*, after all by way of Practical Use, Inference and Application to the whole?

Several do object and needlessly find fault, that I do not digest and compose my Sermons, as other Preachers do by way of Doctrine, Use and Application. Whereas my manner of Preaching to those that understand me thoroughly, is Doctrine, Use and Application all along, by making known plain Propositions and Sentences of Truth; and that not so much Speculative Notional Truth, but Practical Soul saving Truth. And

in the several Sentences of this, there is Doctrine, Use and Application. For it teaches and instructs, and Edifies; and it is the Hearers business to apply it to their Heart and Conscience. Use and Application is altogether as proper in the beginning of a Sermon, as towards the end thereof.

When many things have been said upon one particular subject, it is hard to add much more, and not say over again what hath been already said. However, let us endeavour to raise a Practical Use, or Inference, or two from the whole.

Is it so then, that we must Dye and not Live?

This may teach us in the first Place, to be in good earnest in Matters of Religion, or upon the Evening and making up our accounts with God, with whom we have to do, and to whom we must give them up. One saith well, *We should not altogether live in Jest, for we shall certainly dye in Earnest.* And there is another common Proverbial Speech, *That if ever People will be serious, they will be serious upon their Death-Bed.* For then the Ruffling Royster, Jolly Person, and most merry Man of the World can no longer laugh, when Death doth once begin to fix and set his Countenance, and the Pangs thereof, which are real and sensible, have once began to strike him. But now as it is written, *surely every Man walketh in a vain shew* (in the Margent there it is, an Image) *surely they are disquieted in vain,* Psalm 39. 6. So all our Life here, whether it meet with good and pleasant things, it is all but a vain shew, laughter, and People make a Jest and Light of it; or if it be trouble and disquietude, they are also *vain*. So that we are only carried from one vain extream to another. But when we shall die and not live, or rather enter into that State wherein we shall Live and Die no more, then we shall meet with Substance and
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Realities. Saith Wisdom, *All that love me, shall inherit Substance.* Which being spoken in the Future Tense, hath reference to the Future State of Things. And accordingly, we may observe, that as Man is endued with Wisdom or not, so he shews himself accordingly affected with present things, or seeks after the things to come. A little thing puffs up a Bubble; and Man being but a Bubble, therefore it is that he is soon lifted up and transported. But whoso is endued with real Wisdom, He cannot take Pleasure in Fools Mirth, or in an Idle Jest. Who are passed over the Festivities of Childhood and Youth, they cannot still shew themselves transported with Vanities. All the Jestings and Merriment in the World can never make up the true Happiness, because it is not satisfactory, nor yet enduring. And so all Jestings and Merriment is like the crackling of Thorns under a Pot, which make a sudden Blaze and Noise, but give no solid heat. In the midst of Laughter the Heart is sorrowful. But if it is not so, yet all Worldly and sensible delights are but as one single mouthful of Meat to an hungry Man; which rather excites the Appetite farther and after more than satisfies it. So worldly and sensible Delights raise Anguish, how insufficient and short these things are of a true and inward satisfaction. *O ye Sons of Men, how long will ye love Vanity, and seek after Leasing,* Psalm 4. 3. But it would not be altogether so bad, if all their Jestings and Vanity was confined to those things only. For it is also crept into things pertaining to God and to Religion. For besides, that there is a more gross sort of the Spirit of prophaneness, mocking and drolery at the Things pertaining to God, which is the Abomination of Iniquity, and most provoking in his sight, there is also a lesser kind of jesting, or rather lightness therein; which is also offensive and displeasing.

ing to the God with whom we have to do. Of this sort, may be conceived all that Custom, and Fashion, and Outside in Matters of Religion; or when People go to hear the Word of God preached by such an one, only out of Novelty and Curiosity. In a Word, whensoever People are not so seriously and awfully affected in the Worship of the Lord God, as they ought to be. The Ancient *Gentiles* did use to have their Temples in Caves, or Grotts, or Shady Groves, that there might be a kind of Darknes in them, on purpose to beget and raise a kind of awfulness and horreur in the Worshippers towards the Objects of their Idolatry and Superstition. But as one observes, they borrowed all their Superstition and kind of Worship from the *Jews*: So probably that might have been in Imitation and Resemblance of the *thick Darknes* spoken of in *1 Kings* 8. 12. which the Lord said, He would dwell in. For there was a shew and Representation thereof in the *Jewish* Temple made with hands. But the Holy Ghost did hereby signifie, Holiness becometh thine House for ever. So in like Manner, it may be truly reasoned, great awfulness and seriousness, and intentness of Mind becometh all those, who enter into any place for to Worship the Lord God, or to hear his Word. For it is not a vain thing for them, because it is your Life, *Deut.* 32. 47. People had need be serious and in good earnest about the concernments of their Life. And through this thing they are to go to Heaven, when they go over the *Jordan* of this Life to possess it. According hereto the Scripture speaks and directs, *Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. God is greatly to be honoured in the Assembly of the Saints, and to be had in Reverence by all them that are round about him. Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have Grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with Reverence and Godly Fear,*

I have many times thought, what a brave World we should have, if all Ministers and Preachers were as Godly and Holy, and did *stand in God's Counsel and on his side* (as it becometh his Ambassadors) all one when they are out of their Pulpits, as they seem when they are in them. And so if all other People were as Good and Religious at their several Houses throughout each Week-day, as they appear to be in the Church or Congregation on Sabbath-days, such indeed should be the Christian Life. For though indeed (to our shame be it spoken) even the Religious also give themselves over to a worldly kind of Spirit, and to a worldly kind of Talk and Discourse, that they may become all things to all Men. And when we converse with the People of the World, they cannot bear with and relish Divine and Heavenly Things to be commonly talked of with them, but they are Melancholy and Irkesome thereat. So that we must come over to their kind of talk, or have in a Manner no talk with them. But here it were rather to be wished and desired that their Hearts were so renewed and sanctified, that their chief delight was in that Discourse, which relates to their better Part, and to that Life which shall never End. And that they did or could once come to find more real satisfaction in what is good to the use of edifying, than in the other kind which recreates only for the present, and is concerning those things which in a short time are to be done away. As the Man is, so is his Talk. If he is one of this World, whose Name shall be written in the Earth. I pray God deliver me from that Doom, then according to our Saviour's Aphorism, *He speaks of the World, They are of the World, therefore speak they of the World.* But if he doth indeed belong unto Heaven, then his Conversation is in Heaven, his Delight and his Heart is there, even before his Soul is admitted or doth enter therein. And

if so, and their Affections are once set on things above, and they know the difference, they neither do, nor yet can shew forth the like rejoicing (as the Children of this World do) at the common Accidents and little things here below. Neither are the Children of Light therefore bereaved of all Joy and Delight herein; for it is not taken away, but only changed and placed upon another Object as to them. For they take more satisfaction and Pleasure in speaking to one another of God, and of their fear towards him, and of the things pertaining to his Kingdom, than others do in foolish Talking, and Jestings which are not convenient, *Eph. 5. 4.* nor yet so thoroughly satisfactory to the Heart of Man as that is. *Let no corrupt Communication proceed out of your Mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may Minister Grace unto the Hearers.* Alas! How little is this observed in the ordinary Communication and Conversation in the World? And though we know how to approve the things that are excellent, and how to behave our selves in the solemn Meetings for the Worship of the Lord God, even with great Awe and Dread, thinking and saying with *Jacob*: How dreadful is this Place? this is no other than the Gate of Heaven. Worship is a very solemn and serious thing; for by this, if it be Right and Acceptable in the sight of God, it is the Gate by which People are to enter into Heaven. Yet alas? People are not so awful and devout, and in good earnest as they ought to be at their Worship, and they are yet ten times worse, even ungodly, disobedient, and turning aside when they are from it. O that we were always in all Companies, and in all places such as we are now and then in our most solemn and near approaches to the Lord God in Prayer, or as when we are most affected under the Ordinance of Preaching the Word. O that *Ishmael* might live before thee; O that even the

the remainder of the Worldly Corrupt Nature that is in us might be thus subdued, sanctified, rendered obedient so as to live before God; that the invisible God which is over us, may be to us at all times and in all things, All in All.

The second Practical Use and Inference which I would draw from those words, *Isaiah the Son of Amos came unto him and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, is this, namely as it is written, all his Saints set down at thy feet every one shall receive of thy words, Deut. 33. 3.* which was literally fulfilled, when Jesus Christ the Word of God, sat down so very often and taught the People. And as *Cornelius* said of himself and of those that were there assembled. *Now therefore are we all here present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God, Acts 10. 33.* Even so my self and all ye that hear me this day, should sit down before God (which may be done whilst we are Walking and Meditating in the Field, or whether we are on a Journey, or at Work and Labour in our general Callings, or when we lie on our Bed in our first waking thoughts, yea in all our thoughts all the day long, whether in company or alone we should sit down at the feet of the invisible God and in our Soul be present before God, laying it open and spreading it in his sight. But chiefly our selves should be in a continued sence of as much, or otherwise, all that cannot be done by us, and this is to be in the fear of the Lord all the day long. But to what purpose should we be thus? Even to receive of his words, to hear the things that are commanded us of God. and to perceive and give heed unto what very thoughts he puts into our Soul: so as to obey and do them accord ngly. Now here some may imagine, that one may do this a long time, and yet receive no Vision

or Answer from God. Not so long neither as may be thought for. Though no Man hath seen God at any time nor heard his Voice; yet at this very day he hath three ways of speaking unto Mankind; By his written Word, by his Spirit in the Heart and Conscience of each Man or Woman, and by his Ministers. And we should sit down before God and be present before God for to receive and hear from him all these ways.

It is related of *Augustine*, that about the time of his Conversion from a loose debauched and wicked Life to the Christian Life, he heard a Voice speaking unto him, *Take up the Book and read.* Which he did accordingly, and dipping by chance as he thought, but by the special direction of God, upon the four last verses of the 13. Chapter to the *Romans*, they wrought a Conversion in him. Even so, as often as we take up the Bible to read, or hear another read it, we are to look upon it as a Letter or Epistle of the Lord God to the Inhabitants of the Earth. Whereby (although he is not seen by us) yet he speaketh unto us, and so we are to receive and hear it with Reverence and Godly Fear, and with a Mind to know what the Lord doth say concerning us, and also with a Mind to obey and do according to what the Lord doth herein command us. And where is such a Mind as is Willing and Obedient, Pure and Holy, Sanctified and Cleansed, there he doth put his good Spirit or Angel which shall guide us all along, *to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared, beware of him and obey his Voice, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your Transgressions* (whence note that sins against Conscience are very dangerous) *for my Name is in him*, Exod. 23. 20, 21. *What Man is he that feareth the Lord, him shall he teach in the way that he shall chuse*, Psal. 25. 12.

And

And then God doth speak unto Mankind and teach them by his Word and by his Ministers, who bring or at least they ought to bring all their Exhortation unto the People from the former. For they Preach and make known according as God hath first made known to them by his Word and Spirit. But here, as appears both from searching and enquiring diligently into the Scriptures of Truth, which speak very much concerning them, but little that is good or right of them (see *Isa.* 30. 10, 11. and the twenty third Chapter of *Jeremiah* and the thirteenth and thirty fourth Chapters of *Ezekiel*. For there are whole Chapters which treat of the Errors and Deceits of the Priests or Ministry) in one place of *Jeremiah* it is said, *They shall not profit the People at all.* And compare all this with the flat insipid Preaching of some; whose Ministry (according to the common Proverbial Speech thereof) *is as dead and dull as a door-nail.* For it may be perceived that it hath no manner of Life, Power and Efficacy therein. This shews that the Lord is departed from and displeased with them, and hath withdrawn his Spirit from them. God himself will make a Reform among them and thoroughly purge his Floor in these latter days which are now coming on. *For thus saith the Lord, behold I am against the Shepherds, which as feed themselves and feed not the Flock; but then he will cause them to cease from feeding the Flock.* *Ezek.* 34. 8, 10. instead and in place of whom then he will make good his word, *And I will give you Pastors according to mine Heart, which shall feed you with Knowledge and Understanding,* *Jer.* 3. 15. when the Kingdom of God (which there signifies the Preaching and Ministration of the Gospel) shall be taken from you and given to a Nation bringing forth the fruits thereof, *Matth.* 21. 43. Say I these things as a Man, or do not the Scriptures here alledged say so? which are fulfilled
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and applicable at this very day. For the Holy Ghost in the penning and giving them forth hath consulted for all Persons, Times and Places. Yet in the mean while it is again here applicable, *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do ye not after their Works, for they say and do not.* There is not a Sermon which we usually hear, but there is some Scripture in it or somewhat according to Scripture. And seeing that all Scripture is profitable, we may be certainly edified by that, although we throw from it the trash or husk of what is meerly Man's Invention and Composition. Though some Pastors are Brutish and void of Knowledge and of the Life of God, yet all are not so neither.

But to such Ministers who have the Knowledge and Life of God in them, his Method and Promise is, *The Lord God hath given me the Tongue of the Learned, that I should know how to speak a word in Season to him that is weary; he wakeneth morning by morning, Isa. 50. 4.* So he putteth a seasonable and suitable word into them for to speak out unto his People Sabbath after Sabbath, and from one Lords day unto another; which as it is the Duty of one to utter and declare, so it is of the other for to come to hear and receive it. Hence it is also, though we Ministers know not other Peoples thoughts or secret doings, or their hidden things of Dishonesty, or the things which are done of them in secret; yet we handle that word which is a discernor of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart. And as God speaks concerning the secret, deep and hidden sinful doings of some, *Though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the Sea, thence will I command the Serpent and he shall bite them, Amos 9. 3.* Even so he will guide and command the Ministry of his Word (though we
his

his Ministers that handle and speak it forth know not as to whom) to fetch up their secret sins, to bite or rather prick their Heart and Conscience at the bottom whereof the sin and guilt did before lie. And so the Lord Guides and Commands the Ministry of his Word (*Comfort ye, comfort ye my People, saith your God, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem.* To be Sons of Consolation to some, and to be Sons of Thunder unto others. To speak such a suitable word to all the several and promiscuous Hearers, that all may learn and all may be comforted. Some may be convinced, some converted, some strengthened and builded up according to the several needs of his People; and according to the several great ends for which he in Wisdom appointed the Ministry and Preaching of the Word.

As the Apostle Paul saith to the *Thessalonians*, *But as touching Brotherly Love, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.* So I need not draw any more Practical Uses and Inferences from *Isa. 38. 1.* because that as *Isaiah* the Son of *Amos* came unto *Hezekiah* and said unto him, *Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt die and not live:* So the same God the Creator of all Generations and Persons of Mankind, speaketh unto them in his written Word, in his Spirit in their Hearts and Consciences, and by his Ministers; for by all these ways they are taught of God to set their Souls in Order against the time they shall go out of the Body. Which will time after time, opportunity after opportunity, morning after morning (morning after morning he wakeneth me) and all this will furnish ye with Practical Uses and Inferences enough on this Subject. For all these ways God will teach you what shall be profitable for ye to know, and give an inferring what ye have to do.

And so I have done with this Text, telling ye withal, that all your remaining business throughout your Life here on Earth and whatever other Sermons or Word of Exhortation and Instruction ye may ever hear or read, if it is managed aright, it is all to the same end and purpose, that ye may set your Souls in Order, for ye shall die, that is, they shall go out of the Body. Do ye therefore so live and set your whole Body, Soul and Spirit in Order, that when ye die, ye may live again in Happiness and Bliss, and not in Misery and Punishment; even that your Spirits may be severally saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. *Amen*, faith my Soul, come Lord Jesus, come quickly.

F I N I S.

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